

Title: Don't Forget the Change: Paul's First Defense of Justification by Faith (Part 1)

Text: Galatians 3:1

Central Idea: Don't forget the change!

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[i] Scripture Reading and Prayer (my transl. / JOY)

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?

[ii] What is a rhetorical question?

“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]

T/Merchant of Venice was a play by W. Shakespeare. In that play there is a series of rhetorical questions that are a fitting example of “lit. effect.”

Shylock, Jewish moneylender and central character asks:

“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?”

Some R?s are Funny:

*If nobody cares that Jimmy cracks corn, why does he have a song?

*If the #2 pencil is the most popular, why’s it still #2?

*If you ate pasta and antipasta, would you still be hungry?

*Why isn’t t/most obese man in the world a hockey goalie?

*If you ask a taxi driver to drive backwards will he owe you money?

*If you jog backwards, will you gain weight?

*Did Noah have woodpeckers on the ark? What about termites?

*When did Mon. become t/official day of existential dread?

Some R?s are Senseless:

*Are you still awake? (Can I answer while I'm sleeping?)

*Are you deaf? (If I was would you still ask?)

*How many times do I have to tell you? (until I do it)

*Are you insane? (How would I answer that if I was?)

Some you had better carefully answer: *"Are you stupid?"

[iii] That's close to what Paul asks here in 3:3

3 Are you so foolish? . . .

TAP likes to ask ?'s – part. rheto. one's. – Rom. 6:1

?’s can be intimidating (such as in an interrogation)

?s can be revealing
?'s can have a dramatic effect.

Here in 3:1-5 Paul asks 6 RQs in rapid-fire succession;
for dramatic effect, yes,
but beyond that, as a way to make his point. Count them ==>

- * Who has bewitched you?
- * Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?
- * Are you so foolish?
- * Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?
- * Did you suffer so many things in vain?
- * Does He provide you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?

[iv] To understand why Paul is asking these questions you have to go back to how this letter has unfolded

[v] 1:11 to 2:21 – Defends his authenticity as an apostle
Rem. his ministry & his message was being put into ? by t/Judaiz.

These 1st c. FTers who mixed O.T. Law w/grace, had infiltrated t/Gal. CHs & were sowing seeds of doubt as to Paul's credentials.

1:11–12 11 For I would have you know, brethren, that the gospel which was preached by me is not according to

man.12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.

“I didn't get t/gospel I preach from a man. I wasn't converted under t/authority of t/Jer. A's – and I wasn't taught by them after I came to faith.” (they didn't convert me // train me).

“[My] gospel came directly from Christ who is the Gospel!”

[vi] Starting with 1:13 we have what's been compared to a courtroom drama

Paul takes on t/role of defense attorney as he syst. unfolds a 4-part defense of his Apostolic credentials.

Begins w/his unique conversion. Saul t/zealous Jewish intellectual, a protege of t/esteemed Rabbi Gamaliel, was converted to t/faith he set out to destroy (cf. 1:15-16).

From that point in chapt. 1 Paul goes on to outline his relationship w/the CH in Jerusalem – establishing his independence from them while at t/same time affirming that they shared t/same message of salvation in X alone.

By t/time you get to 2:11-21, a passage that marks a key transition to chapters 3 & 4, you have TAP confronting Peter (apostle) over t/latter's hypocrisy as it related to t/Gospel.

Central verse 2:16 →

16 . . . knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we may be justified by faith in

Christ, and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified.

Justification is by faith alone!

If 2:16 (JbyF) is Paul's main thesis, then chapt. 3-4 form what many scholars refer to as t/probatio (Latin “evidence”) of that thesis. Justification is by faith alone!

[vii] Paul's first line of evidence is the Galatians themselves (their experience with t/Father, Son, H.S.)

[viii] Chapter 1:11 onward were all about Paul's experiences

Chapter 1

His life as an unregenerate Jew

How he received t/Gospel (directly thru X)

His time in Arabia and Damascus

His first trip to Jerusalem

His trek into the regions of Syria and Cilicia

Chapter 2

His second trip to Jerusalem w/Barnabas and Titus

His confrontation there w/the Judaizers

His meeting w/Peter, James, John

Then we find him in Antioch where he confronts Peter in regard to his hypocrisy.

Those are all personal experiences. Sure, there's some great doctr. truth in there—esp. chap. 2 (just. by faith / union w/X)

From those truths, object. & subj. Paul reminds t/Gal. Xns of their own experience w/the H.S. which serves to prove they were just. by faith alone, not by works of t/Law.

[ix] That may sound like experientialism to some of you
“Tony, are you saying Paul is grounding truth in pers. exp?”
No, he’s grounding personal exper. in truth.

Our subjective experiences are essential
G. made us to exper. things. We’re not computers, we’re ppl.

Must be objective truth – foundational / doesn't change.

Obj. truth w/o subj. experience results in creedalism. Just affirm t/creed & you are a Xn. Have been entire denomin. & movts. in CH hist. that had a great understanding of t/Gospel on paper—creed—but little approp. of that in real life (conver.)

Of course, t/opposite extreme is dangerous as well – when people base truth on their subjective experiences.

Balance – Exper. consistent w/and grounded in Truth.

Experiences we have that are grounded in t/truth of Script. are true exper.

That incl. our senses, our emotions, our hearts.

[x] So here is where Paul is going . . .

He begins his defense of JbyF w/the spiritual experience of t/Gal. in vv. 1-5.

He asks them if they rec.t/HS thru t/Law or by faith?
He reminds them that they began their exper. w/X by t/Sp.
Therefore, they cannot be perfected by t/flesh.
He reminds them of their sufferings
He asks them if t/HS & t/miracles among them came thru
t/Law or faith

That's vv. 1-5.

Starting in v. 6 he then defends t/Gospel by means of OT
Script., starting w/t/OT patriarch Abraham.

But vv. 1-5 are about experience grounded in truth.

[xi] Title for passage . . .

*Don't Forget the Change: Paul's first defense of
Justification by faith*

No doubt you have gone to a store or rest, paid your bill
w/cash & prematurely began to head for t/door when you
heard t/words, "don't forget t/change!" That could be signif.
– esp. if you paid for a 5 dollar item w/a 20 dollar bill!

Not what I'm talking about.

I'm talking about your changed life. That's your testimony.

When I was B.A. & came to believe in JC as my L&S - my
life changed. I've never been the same.

Back in 19th c. a man by name of Charles Bradlaugh, a
prom. atheist, challenged a Xn evangelist to debate t/validity
of Xnity.

Hugh Price Hughes, was an evangelist who worked among t/poor in t/slums of London.

Hughes told Bradlaugh that he would agree to a debate on one cond: that each of them would bring some concrete evid. of t/validity of ea. one's belief system in t/form people who have had their lives transformed through t/content of their teaching (worldview).

Hughes said, "I will bring 100 such men & women, & I challenge you to do t/same." Hughes then said that if Bradlaugh couldn't bring 100, then he could bring 50; if he couldn't bring 50 then he could bring 20. He finally whittled the number down to one. All Bradlaugh had to do was to find one person whose life was transformed by atheism & Hughes—who would bring 100 transformed by Christ—would agree to the debate. T/atheist Bradlaugh withdrew. [Adapted from D. James Kennedy, What If Jesus Had Never Been Born, 189] Note similar story told by James M. Boice related to H.A.Ironside in Boice's Foundations of the Christian Faith, 64-66]

What about U? R you one of t/100? Have you been changed?

JC changes lives in a way that mere rel. or humanistic philos. cannot possibly do.

Don't forget the change! T/lesson of 3:1-5.

[xii] Question: Are these 1st c. Galatians Christians?

Overall, yes. Seems obvious as you read these 5 vv. that Paul's assumption is that he's addressing real believers.

[xiii] The lurking danger of apostasy is real

Been a recurring theme up to this point—esp. in chapt. 1.
Some were tempted to forsake t/true gospel.

There's always t/danger in any CH that there will be tares
among t/wheat, those who are “professors, not possessors.”

We all know some1 who has made a shipwreck of their faith.

But Paul is confident overall that t/G. who began t/good
work will perfect that work.

5:10 I have confidence in you in the Lord, that you will
adopt no other view . . .

[xiv] Similar to 2 Corinthians 13:5-6

5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine
yourselves! 6 Or do you not recognize this about yourselves,
that Jesus Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?

That's a verse commonly used to encourage those who aren't
living like Xns to self-eval. to see if they indeed *are* Xns.

I suppose that is an applic. of that v. But I think we miss
Paul's point.

Here we have another rhetorical ?

6 Or do you not recognize this about yourselves, that Jesus
Christ is in you—unless indeed you fail the test?

That's a ? that grammatically implies a “yes” answer. “Yes,
we do recognize that JC is in us.” (union w/X).

Here in 2 Cor. Paul is defending his apostleship (something he was often forced to do).

T/response by t/Corinthians affirming that they are in X, will result in t/realization that t/human agent behind their salv. was Paul. He was t/one who brought them t/Gospel.

Ergo: If their faith was genuine, so was his apostleship!

7 But I trust that you will realize that we ourselves do not fail the test.

Similar thing here in Galatians.

[xv] Not that every single one of them truly knew Jesus
To tell a group of Xns that t/change in their lives is evidence of their salv. serves as a warning to those whose lives aren't changed.

[xvi] Back in Galatians 3:1-5 — there is a Trinitarian structure

*The Believer's Experience with Christ (3:1)

*The Believer's Experience with the Holy Spirit (3:2-4)

*The Believer's Experience with the Father (3:5)

Don't forget the change!

[xvii] Our outline . . . (note the 6 rhetorical questions)

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

A. First Question: Who Duped You?

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

A. Second Question: Did You Receive the Spirit by Doing or Believing? (v. 2)

- B. Third Question: Are You Really That Foolish? (v. 3a)**
- C. Fourth Question: Can Your Efforts Perfect What the Spirit Began? (v. 3b)**
- D. Fifth Question: Did You Endure Suffering For Nothing? (v. 4)**

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

- A. Sixth Question: Does He Provide the Spirit by Your Doing or Believing?**

Verse 1 and our 1st point ==>

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

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

A. First Question: Who Duped You?

1. As I translated it:

1b . . . Who has bewitched you . . .

2. That question is prefaced by an eye-popping statement:

1a O foolish Galatians! . . .

a. This question echoes Paul's statement in 1:6

"I am amazed you are so quickly deserting the faith for a different gospel."

In chapt. 1 Paul was "amazed."

Here he pract. accuses t/Gal. of foolishness.

? he repeats in v. 3 - "are you so foolish"

b. Both times he uses the Greek noun ἀνόητος

1 old Gk. scholar writes that ==>

“ἀνόητος . . . denotes the stupidity that arises from deadness and impotence of intellect.” [Wuest, Ga 3:1]

c. This is mental flabbiness – something that is endemic in the church today

(1) That's a problem

To be a disciple – a μαθητης – is to be a learner and to be a learner is to use your mind.

Mindful of t/story told by Howard Hendricks →

"I once asked a pathologist friend in Philadelphia, 'Have you seen many brains?' 'Hundreds of them,' he said. 'Have you ever seen one worn out?' 'I've never seen one even slightly used,' he answered." [Howard Hendricks, Teaching to Change Lives, 41]

(2) We are ignorant

We think RCism is another Xn denomination.

We think that salvation is little more than “Asking Jesus into your heart” or “making a decision for X”

We know little of t/great doctrines of t/faith: justification; union w/X; t/imputation of X's righteousness to t/believer.

We think people are born neutral at best or good at worst.

(3) In an article published several years ago . . .

New Poll Finds Evangelicals' Favorite Heresies: Survey finds many American evangelicals hold unorthodox views on the Trinity, salvation, and other doctrines.

Sub-heading ==>

“Most American evangelicals hold views condemned as heretical by some of the most important councils of the early church.”

This article focuses on a survey . . . by LifeWay Research for Ligonier Ministries. That survey: “reveals a significant level of theological confusion . . . Many evangelicals do not have orthodox views about either God or humans, especially on questions of salvation and the Holy Spirit.”

Article goes on ==>

“Evangelicals did score high on several points. Nearly all believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead (96%), and that salvation is found through Jesus alone (92%). Strong majorities said that God is sovereign over all people (89%) and that the Bible is the Word of God (88%).

“And in some cases the problem seems to be uncertainty rather than heresy. For example, only 6 percent of evangelicals think the Book of Mormon is a revelation from God, but an additional 18 percent aren’t sure and think it might be.”

Under the heading ==>

Jesus, Almost as Good as His Father?

“Almost all evangelicals say they believe in the Trinity (96%) and that Jesus is fully human and fully divine (88%).

“But nearly a quarter (22%) said God the Father is more divine than Jesus, and 9 percent weren’t sure. Further, 16 percent say Jesus was the first creature created by God, while 11 percent were unsure.

“But if evangelicals sometime misunderstand doctrines about Jesus, the third member of the Trinity has it much worse. More than half (51%) said the Holy Spirit is a force, not a personal being. Seven percent weren’t sure, while only 42 percent affirmed that the Spirit is a person.

“And 9 percent said the Holy Spirit is less divine than God the Father and Jesus. The same percentage answered “not sure.”

As to our salvation . . .

“More than half of survey participants (55%) said people have to contribute to their own salvation.

“Human nature and salvation were other areas of confusion for respondents. Two out of three (68%) said that a person obtains peace with God by seeking God first, and then God responds with grace.

“A similar percentage (67%) said people have the ability to turn to God on the own initiative. Yet half (54%) also think s a l v a t i o n b e g i n s w i t h G o d a c t i n g f i r s t .

[<http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2014/october-web-only/new-poll-finds-evangelicals-favorite-heresies.html>]

(4) So what is it?

Are we totally depraved or good?

Is G. t/author of our salv. or are we?

(5) We need to learn from history . . .

We can go back to t/5th c. A British monk named Pelagius argued that people can choose G. by t/strength of their own will (theological “voluntarism”).

Idea that Adam’s sin did not sabotage human freedom; we retain t/ability to choose & follow G. by t/strength of our will

This became known as t/heresy of Pelagianism.

It was condemned at t/Council of Carthage in 418 — & later at t/Council of Ephesus in 431.

A variation, known as Semipelagianism, cropped up shortly thereafter, affirming original sin but teaching that humans take t/initiative in salvation. (cf. Arminianism).

“God chooses for you. Satan chooses against you. You make the final decision.”

T/Council of Orange in 529 condemned Semipelagianism, maintaining that faith is a gift of God’s grace & does not originate in ourselves. In order to believe, we need t/work of t/HS in regeneration.

The Council put it this way:

“If anyone says that God has mercy upon us when, apart from his grace, we believe . . ., but does not confess that it is by the infusion and inspiration of the Holy Spirit within us that we have the faith . . ., or if anyone makes the assistance of grace depend on the humility or obedience of man and does not agree that it is a gift of grace itself that we are obedient and humble, he contradicts the Apostle who says, “What have you that you did not receive?” (1 Cor. 4:7), and, “But by the grace of God I am what I am” (1 Cor. 15:10).

"The supreme end of Education is the power to tell the genuine from the counterfeit." [18th c. English Author Samuel Johnson]

There are myriads of counterfeit gospels & theologies out there. Need to learn to discern what's true from what's not.

"To fail to learn is to learn to fail" We are to think.

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

A. First Question: Who Duped You?

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

3. Paul is not saying that they are not to blame

a. They are at fault and accountable

1a O foolish Galatians! . . .

T/blame lies with themselves.

b. We still have the word "who?"

1b . . . Who has bewitched you? . . .

4. Who is in the background? Who's fueling the fire?

Some see here a ref. to Satan (king of deception & lies).

Or ringleader of t/Judaizing faction that had infiltrated t/CH.

5:10 . . . the one who is disturbing you will bear his judgment, whoever he is.

5. Remember - this is a rhetorical question

a. The emphasis isn't on the “who” but on the “bewitching”

(1) “To bewitch” = Gk. verb βιάσκαινω

“To exert an evil influence through the eye, bewitch.”

[William Arndt et al., *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 171]

This word is related to t/metaphor of giving someone
“t/evil eye.”

Same word is used in the writings of Plato. For example in
t/Phaedo (*feedoe*) Plato writes this:

“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)]

6. There’s a word-play here

Only get it if you understand t/orig. Gk. lang.

1a **O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you . . .**
[given you t/evil eye]

1b . . . **before whose EYES Jesus Christ was publicly
portrayed as crucified?**

*Someone may have tricked you—even cursed you.
You didn’t see it. But you did see Jesus.*

7. In history this is true

Jesus died publicly. He was crucified between 2 thieves in
t/sight of all.

But what does Paul say? [^]

None of them would have been an eye-witness of t/crucifixn.

8. How was Jesus publicly portrayed crucified to them?

a. The same way that is true for us

Thru t/preaching & teaching of God's Word.

Rom. 10:13–14 13 for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED.” 14 How then will they call on Him in whom they have not believed? How will they believe in Him whom they have not heard? And how will they hear without a preacher?

2 Tim. 2:2 The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.

1 Cor. 15 1 Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand . . . 3 For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,

b. This is referred to as the kerygma of the church

“Kerygma” is from t/Gk. word meaning “proclamation.”

This is t/initial, fundamental message of the Gospel, focusing on t/life, death, & resurr. of JC. T/message of salv.

Here in v. 1 Paul is referring to an accurate descrip. of an hist. event that was itself public & vividly portrayed in Paul's preaching & embraced by t/ Galatians

9. This could be translated “placarded”

1b . . . Jesus Christ was publicly placarded as crucified?

a. A placard is a public notice

“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]

Timothy George:

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?” [George,

209]

And so ==>

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]

b. This is preaching with word pictures

Jesus, t/sinless SOG. Human like us, yet w/o sin.

Jesus who at t/end of His life endured a series of six trials, 3 before Jews & 3 before t/Romans.

He was mocked, spit upon, beaten nearly to death w/a whip, t/ends of which had bone/metal attached. Skin was laid bare.

A cross was placed upon His back.

He carried it until he could no longer.

At t/place of crucifixion he was nailed to a wooden cross & died a horrible, excruciating death (ex-cruciate).

He did that for us.

Can you picture it? Can you see t/blood, t/agony? Can you see this sinless man, God incarnate, bearing t/burden of sin.

Your sin?

“My God, My God! Why have you forsaken Me?”

2 Cor. 5:21 He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Paul was criticized by some in Corinth as being a poor public speaker. I don't believe it. He got his words across. And his hearers got t/picture.

Do you get the picture?

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

If He has, *Don't forget the change!*

If He hasn't, come to Him in faith & repentance.

Anonymous author ==>

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]