

Title: Don't Forget the Change: Paul's First Defense of Justification by Faith (Part 2)

Text: Galatians 3:2-5

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?**

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**[ii] Kingdom of the Cults and 1st c. Judaizers . . .**

Dr. Walter Martin's classic, "The KD of t/Cults" is a trem. ref. work. Some 800 pp. of data on various modern-day cults and religious movements. Great resource.

1st publ. in 1965 & has gone thru several revisions.

Had KDC been written in t/1st c. (would have been a much smaller book) but no doubt t/1st chapt. would have been devoted to a group known as t/Judaizers (ref. to as "t/party of the circum." 2:12).

We see this heretical group at work in Galatians –

they are a key to understanding what's going on t/o t/letter.

**[iii] Word “Judaizer” comes from a verb in 2:14 →**  
14 ...how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?

Entire phrase “To live like Jews” comes from t/single word  
Ἰουδαῖζω – tranlit. int Engl. as “Judaize.”

Paul isn't talking about t/rank & file Israelite.

He's referring to a specific group of people – what very well  
may be t/first Xn cult.

**[iv] They were the ones who prompted the first church  
council: Acts 15**

We're told in v. 1 that they came to Jerus. from Judea &  
were teaching t/Xns there that they had to be circumcised in  
order to be saved.

This is t/same group that had infiltrated t/Gal. CH's. Their  
message was that faith in X alone was insuff.

If you want to be right w/G. you must also keep the Law.

Equation: Gospel = X + Law.

That intrusion of works into t/Gospel of grace is what Paul  
warns about in 1:6 where he calls it a – ἕτερος εὐαγγέλιον –  
“diff. gospel” which he also says is no gospel at all.

A False Gospel can neither save nor sanctify.

True gospel centers on justif. by faith alone – a point Paul  
makes in that key v: 2:16 which maintains that we cannot be

justified by works of t/Law (circumcision, dietary regs, Sabbath observance—works) but only thru faith in XJ.

Only way to be justified / to be saved from t/condemnation of sin is through believing in JC as t/one who suffered, died, rose again in t/place of sinners.

There is no Gospel apart from this truth, one that Paul defends in chapt 3-4.

**[v] Paul begins that defense in 3:1-5 by reminding the Galatians of their personal experience coming out of paganism into the light of Christ**

We saw last time that Paul has moved from his experience w/X in chapt. 1& 2 to t/Gals. experience w/the Triune G.

Their experience w/the F/S/HS demonstrates that they were justified by faith alone, not by works.

**[vi] Summary . . .**

The Galatians' Spiritual Experience Was Received by Believing, not Doing

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**[vii] Six Rhetorical Questions**

This was a very Jewish thing to do. We see t/use of RQs in t/prophets. Example: Isaiah 45:9 ==>

“Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker— An earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth! Will the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you doing?’ Or the thing you are making say, ‘He has no hands’?”

In that vein, TAP asks t/Galatians 6 R?’s in these 5 vv.

Verse 1 ==> \* Who has bewitched you?

Verse 2 ==> \* Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?

Verse 3==> \* Are you so foolish? \* Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Verse 4 ==> \* Did you suffer so many things in vain?

Verse 5==> \* Does He provide you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?

[vii] **He begins with faith in v. 2 and finishes with faith in v. 5**  
About faith / belief / trust. Saving faith is sufficient.

Not only sufficient, but it demonstrates itself in a transf. life.

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Trinitarian formula (outline):

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

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

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

First “change” Paul addresses is that brought about by JC →

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

**1. First Rhetorical Question: Who Duped You?**

**a. To be “duped” is to be “deceived” / “tricked”**

**(1) The word he uses is βύσκαϊνω (“to bewitch”)**

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

**(2) This word “bewitch” has the idea of exerting an evil influence through the eye (giving someone “the evil eye”)**

**b. There’s a word-play here**

**1a Who has bewitched you . . . [given you t/evil eye]**

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

**(1) Someone may have deceived you**

Maybe Satan himself has given you t/evil eye.

Maybe you didn’t see it coming.

**BUT you did see Jesus!**

He was publicly portrayed as cruc. before your very eyes.

Word means “placarded” as on a billboard.

None of them would have been there to see Jesus crucif.

But they “saw” it — thru t/ministry of t/Gospel & t/test. of God’s Word.

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

T/Gals. would have been forced to answer in t/affirmative.

**c. What about you? Have you been changed?**

## **(1) Has Jesus changed your life?**

If so, it wasn't by your works, it was by faith.  
If it was genuine faith, you have been changed.

What was t/report Paul heard about t/Thessalonians?  
[they] . . . turned to God from idols to serve a living and true  
God. [1 Thess 1:9]

John Calvin, in his Institutes of the Christian Religion, refers  
to the heart as a "perpetual forge of idols".

Our hearts are idol factories! What's an idol? Anything that  
is worshiped in the place of G.

When we come to X in faith we are changed. Like t/Thess.  
we turn from those idols to serve JC & worship Him alone.

That comes by faith, not works.  
Have you been changed?

## **(2) Maybe that question give you pause . . .**

Perhaps you have been changed, but you still have a long  
way to go. True of us all.

We have to rem. that even among t/most mature believers  
there dwells t/potential of remanufacturing those idols we'd  
hoped were long gone.

May t/words of t/19th c. Eng. preacher, CHS bring comfort >  
"My hope lives not because I am not a sinner, but because I  
am a sinner for whom Christ died; my trust is not that I am  
holy, but that being unholy, He is my righteousness. My

faith rests not upon what I am or shall be or feel or know, but in what Christ is, in what He has done, and in what He is now doing for me. Hallelujah!" [C. Spurgeon, updated English by Alistair Begg]

"As we . . . when we have been engrafted in Christ, are righteous in God's sight because our iniquities are covered by Christ's sinlessness, so our works are righteous because whatever fault is otherwise in them is buried in Christ's purity, and is not charged to our account." [J. Calvin, Institutes, III.17.10]

"A Christian is not of hasty growth, like a mushroom, but that like an oak, the progress of which is hardly perceptible, but in time becomes a great deep-rooted tree." [John Newton]

### **(3) If you haven't been changed . . .**

. . . if your life has in no way been transformed, it's time to come to X in faith. He has been publicly placarded B4 you  
You have heard t/Gospel {explain} — now you are called to believe & repent. If you haven't, why are you waiting . . .

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Paul next turns to t/3d person of t/Trinity

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

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

#### **1. Note how the verse begins:**

**2a This is the only thing I want to learn from you . . .**

#### **2. The central question // crucial // critical // chief**

All t/other ?'s asked in these 5 vv. hinge on & relate to this 1.

Why Paul prefaces it with:

2a **This is the only thing I want to learn from you . . .**

What is that only thing? He asks it of them; G. asks it of us.

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

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

If so, “how?”

2b **. . . did you receive the Holy Spirit . . .**

Assumption is that they had.

### **3. “Receive” = Aorist Verb – Past action / Moment of Salvation**

#### **a. Entrance into the faith / justification**

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. True of every born-again bel.

#### **a. Turn to Romans 8**

1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

3 For what the Law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and as an offering for sin, He condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the requirement of the Law might be fulfilled in us, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.



All of t/Law's demands have been fulfilled in us thru X.  
We now walk (live) by t/Spirit.

Paul draws a contrast (unbelief vs. belief) ==>

5 For those who are according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace,<sup>7</sup> because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

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.<sup>10</sup> And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.

**b. Holy Spirit's coming was the mark of a new age predicted by the OT prophets**

**(1) Book of Acts –**

1:4–5 4 And gathering them together, He commanded them not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait for what the Father had promised, “Which,” He said, “you heard of from Me;<sup>5</sup> for John baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

Next chapter you have t/birth of t/NT CH –  
t/HS is poured out upon God's ppl.

This is part & parcel w/the NC predicted by the OT prophets (Ezek. / Jer.) & fulfilled in t/death, burial & resurr. of Jesus – & t/giving of t/Spirit at Pentecost.

**c. Back to the question in verse 2 ==>**

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

**4. Here we have the first mention of the Holy Spirit in Galatians**

**a. I look forward to chapter 5 . . .**

We'll come back to t/min. of t/Spirit later in t/book & take a more detailed theol. look at Spirit's work in t/life of t/believr.

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

**b. How did you receive the Holy Spirit?**

What did you have to do? You say, “believe.” But even that belief is a gift of G’s grace thru regeneration. You didn’t cause your own birth // open your own eyes. Was by faith. 3:14 [the blessing of Abraham came to the Gentiles], so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

**e. Abraham was justified by faith**

That was B4 he was circumcised (3:6-9; Rom. 4). He didn’t keep Sabbath or dietary regulations. He believed.

ISW - we believe & we receive. We're not perfected by works, what we do (v. 3). We're perfected thru t/work of t/HS in keeping w/the Word.

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Story is told about t/discovery of oil on Indian land in Oklahoma. T/Indian tribe on whose land t/oil was found became wealthy overnight.

What do you do when you're wealthy? You buy a nice car. So one of t/tribesmen bought himself a Rolls Royce. He drove it around for a wk or so, but when it ran out of gas he assumed it was broken or that he had worn it out.

Not wanting to lose face, he told his friends that he was tired of it & didn't want it anymore.

So one of his friends claimed t/car & removed t/engine to reduce its weight. He then hitched a team of horses to it. T/horse drawn Rolls Royce was his means of transportation for years. [adapted from MacArthur, Keys to Spiritual Growth, 80]

We would call that ignorant at best, foolish at worst.

**B. Third Question: Are You Really That Foolish? (v. 3b)**  
**3b ... Are you so foolish? ...**

J.B. Phps "Surely you can't be so idiotic";  
NEB "Can it be that you are so stupid?"

Same word used in v. 1.

What are they being foolish about ==>

**C. Fourth Question: Can Your Efforts Perfect What the Spirit Began? (v. 3b)**

**3b . . . Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?**

Like a man who hooks up a RR to a team of horses, we're foolish whenever we try to perfect in our humanness what G. has done by His Sp.

**3b . . . Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?**

**1. May be a veiled reference to circumcision here (the ultimate work of the flesh so to speak)**

**a. It's not the physical act of circumcision that perfects you**  
It's what t/phys. act pointed to: t/circumcision of t/heart.

6:15 For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

**2. Note the contrast: Beginning and Completing**

**3b . . . Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?**

Paul seems to be asking t/? – “OK – you started t/Xn life by t/work of t/HS – are you doing to finish what He started on your own?”

**3. Remember the Judaizers . . .**

They rejected justification by faith alone. They also rejected sanctification – being perfected in t/Xn life – by faith.

You were sanctified by keeping t/Mosaic Law.

For them, t/entirety of salvation required t/Law – getting in & staying in.

Dr. Tom Scheiner ==>

...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.... 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. [Schreiner, 184–185]

**4. We see both justification and sanctification in verse 3 3b . . . Having begun by the Spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh?**

Beginning by t/Spirit = justif.

“Being perfected” that’s sanctification.

Attempting to further Xn growth (sanct.) by means of t/Law is an affront to t/Gospel of grace.

## **5. We saw that in chapter 2**

### **a. Peter in Antioch who ate with the Gentiles UNTIL some Judaizers arrived on the scene**

Then he hypocr. sep. from his non-Jewish brethren.

Paul goes on to say that other Jews joined in that, even Barn. In v. 14 Paul sums up this hypocritical behavior that related to Xn living as “not acting straight-forward concerning the truth of the gospel.”

So, t/Gospel transcends justif. It also relates to our sanct. What we see here in chapt. 3.

To begin t/Xn life by t/sov. work of t/Spirit in justif. & then attempt to perfect that work in sanct. on t/basis of your own works? That’s foolishness!

### **b. It’s all about faith**

T/B. teaches JBFA! I’m astounded at how we avoid that simple word “Faith.” We talk about “asking Jesus into your heart” / “make a decision for X” / “Jesus as personal Sav.” What does that mean? He’s my personal pocket savior? We believe & repent (those two are not t/same).

So if you are trusting in any works to save or sanctify, you are a fool. That’s what Paul is saying here.

**C. Fifth Question: Did You Suffer For Nothing? (v. 4)**  
**4 Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?**

# 1. Translation Issue

## **a. There are differences in the translation of a word that can have two different meanings**

Most translations have “suffer.” Some of them place a fn. by t/word telling t/reader that it can also be transl. “experience.”

NIV: “Have you experienced so much in vain . . .” [note “suffered”]

## **b. Word in question is the verb πάσχω**

### **(1) The word is used of Christ’s suffering**

1 Peter 2:23 . . . while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who judges righteously;

### **(2) Suffering is negative . . .**

But t/word can be used in a neutral or even pos. sense of “experience.”

That would fit t/context of t/Galatians experiences which is why some Engl. translations go w/that option.

### **(3) Here’s the problem . . .**

Every time this word is used in t/LXX it's used in t/neg. sense of suffering. Same thing in t/41 uses of t/word in t/NT. If Paul means “experience” here, it would be t/only place where that meaning occurs. I think that’s unlikely.

### **(4) Suffering Galatians?**

Some have claimed that there's no record of suffering in Southern Galatia.

Listen, to embrace X is to embrace suffering.

Acts 14:22 says that Paul & Barnabas strengthened & encouraged t/CH by reminding them ==>

. . . “Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”

**2. The Question: How would their suffering be in vain if they were falling prey to a gospel of works?**

**a. Goes back to the Gospel**

To suffer for a false gospel is foolish / vain.

**b. Remember: The Gospel gives meaning to our suffering**

We follow Jesus in His suffering. He is t/Suff. Servant.

How can we expect to be exempt?

**c. To suffer for Him is to fill up His afflictions**

Col. 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ’s afflictions.

That doesn’t mean that anything is deficient in what X has done. This means that we suffer for Him in ways He can no longer suffer bc He’s ascended to t/Father. Cf. Phil. 2:30 / E.

We are living examples in our lives of t/Suffering Servant.



All of our suffering, unless it's a direct result of our sin, is suffering for X. G.-ordained suffering.

Phil. 3:10 that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death;

1 Peter 4:13 but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.

Can't do that when you're foolishly dancing w/a false Gosp.

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

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

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

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

5 **Consequently** [word indicates that Paul is bringing his argument to an end] **does He provide you with the Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the Law or by hearing with faith?**

**1. God has done two things for them:**

**a. He provides them with the Spirit**

**(1) Idea of “abundantly” / “giving freely and liberally”**  
PT verb – t/gift of t/Spirit isn't limited to something in t/past, it's a present reality. We possess t/present reality of t/H.S.

When we are saved we are baptized by t/HS into t/CH (univ. body of X) // indwelt by t/HS // Filled with t/HS. He gives us

gifts for ministry, He comforts us & testifies to our hearts that we are indeed children of G.

Sp. will never lead you in ways contrary to Script. Imp!  
{“I prayed about it” // “Spirit led me” excuse}

To be filled w/the Sp. is to be filled w/the Word. They work in tandem.

## **b. Work miracles among them**

### **(1) What does that mean?**

#### **(a) This is specific to the 1st c. church**

Sign miracles. T/sorts of dramatic miracles assoc. w/the A.

2 Cor. 12:12 The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.

Dramatic acts of healing; dead raised; casting out demons; unknown languages; dreams/visions . . .

We’re no longer in t/apostolic age so these sorts of things are not normative. Key word “Normative.”

#### **(b) Miracles still happen (particularly in other parts of the world)**

Miracle = G. supernaturally changing t/expected course of an event (we expect the dead to remain dead).

#### **i. Don’t commit the fallacy of Denying the Antecedent**

“Tony said t/Apostolic age was charact. by miracles; we’re

not in TAA, therefore he's claiming there are no more miracles." Not what I'm saying.

**ii. "Normative"**

We don't see "sign miracles" like those during t/times of Moses & Joshua; Elijah & Elisha; X & t/Apostles.

Every new birth is a M. Personal: {Giana and the notebook}

But for 1st c. Gal. they would have seen visible miracles at work among them—esp. thru t/min. of Paul.

**2. Paul asks the Galatians ==>**

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

**a. What's the answer class?**

**b. The Lesson for us . . .**

F/S/HS are perfectly suffic. for your entire life lived in X.

*By various maxims, forms, and rules,*

*That pass for wisdom in the schools,*

*I sought my passion to restrain;*

*But all my efforts proved in vain.*

*But since my Savior I have known*

*My rules are all reduced to One,*

*To keep my Lord by faith in view,*

*This strength supplies and motive too.*

[John Newton]

**3. Remember the river illustration I gave a few weeks ago**

T/moral or universal law is like t/banks of t/river.  
R lives lived in X is t/flowing water.

T/law (river banks) keeps us contained / informs our direction. Like a map; we are to only go where t/river banks direct us. Found. role of Script.

T/H.S. works as we are guided by t/river banks.

T/banks tell me not to do certain things (lust, covet, lie, mistreat others, make idols) & what things to do (meditate on Script.; work hard; provide for my family; love G. & others). It informs our doctrinal understanding of t/great themes of Scripture (who God is; what is salv.).  
It's about a life of worship, love & joy.

T/river banks could also be likened to t/great commandment given by Jesus: Know who G. is; Love Him // your neighbor. Those river banks fulfill t/Law as we progress down t/course of t/river by faith.

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Work in unity.

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By faith, keep your eyes on t/empty Cross.

Philip Graham Ryken tells t/story of a painting by t/19th c. artist Hendrik Leys. T/painting is called 'Women Praying at a Crucifix near St. James in Antwerp.'

T/women themselves are portrayed w/painstaking detail. Careful attention is paid to every fold in t/fabric of their gowns. Likewise, t/background is painted to show t/beauty of t/garden by t/CH wall.

There is one thing missing from the painting, however, & this the Cross itself. Leys shows the women at worship, but not the Christ they have come to adore.

'So what do we see?' asked the Dutch art critic Hans Rookmaker (1922-77). 'People from a past period, full of faith, reverent, praying—but we do not see the object of faith, the crucified Christ.'" [Adapted from Ryken, 92-93]

Lesson for us – Keep your eyes on Jesus. (Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full . . .)

He alone is not only t/author, but t/perfecter of your faith. Relax & Rejoice in t/all-suff. grace of JC.