

Title: **Don't Forget the Change (Part 1)**

Passage: **Galatians 3:1**

Theme: **Paul's First Defense of Justification by Faith Alone: The Galatians**

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{ {Read Passage} }

[i] Rhetorical Questions

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]

The 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 Jimmy cracks corn and no one cares, why is there a song about him?

Can you buy an entire chess set in a pawn shop?

What does cheese say when it has its photo taken?

Where in the nursery rhyme does it say humpty dumpty is an egg?

Why do they sterilize needles for lethal injections?

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

Are zebras black with white stripes, or white with black stripes?

Aren't all rooms at room temperature?

Do bald men use shampoo?

Some R?s are Senseless:

Are you still awake? (Can I answer that one 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?"

[ii] That's close to what Paul asks here in 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.

What we have here – 6 ?'s (R?'s) that Paul asks in rapid-fire succession – for dramatic effect – beyond mere effect, as a way to make his point.

* *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?

[iii] What is Paul doing here – Where is he going with this?

You have to look at how all of this has unfolded to this point.

[iv] 1:11 to 2:21 – Defends his authenticity as an apostle of JC

(in def. his apost. he also def. his authority – that was t/issue w/Judz).

Galatians 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.

Paul's gospel came directly from Christ who is the Gospel

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, either." (they didn't convert me // disciple me).

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

Beg. w/v. 13 we have what's been cf. to a courtroom drama where Paul takes on t/role of defense attorney as he syst. unfolds a 4-part defense of his unique authority as an A.

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 →

. . . 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 by faith alone!

[v] Here we have Paul talking largely about his experience

This is what happened to me – this is my testimony of t/Lord's sov. work in my life.

Well, if chapter 2:16 (JbyF) is Paul's main thesis, then chapters 3-4 form what many scholars refer to as t/*probatio* (Latin “proof”) of that thesis.

[vi] Paul's 1st line of evidence in that regard is the Galatians themselves

Paul moves from his experience w/X as proving his apostleship

to

t/Gal. experience w/the Holy Spirit as proving that they were justified by faith alone, not by works of t/Law.

In case you are wondering about basing truth on experience – that's not t/case here. Sometimes we make too little of our experience (subjective aspects of what it means to be a Xn).

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

Objective truth w/o subjective experience results in creedalism (entire denominations/movts. over t/hist. of t/CH that had a great understanding of t/Gospel on paper – creed – but little appropriation of that in real life (conversion)).

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

Balance – Experience that is consistent w/and grounded in Truth.

Where Paul is going.

Begins his def. of JbyF w/the spiritual experience of t/Gal. in vv. 1-5 – but then he goes on beg. in v. 6 to defend t/Gospel by means of OT Script., starting w/t/OT patriarch Abraham.

[vii] Summary . . .

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

The gift of the Spirit is received by believing not doing.

[viii] It seems pretty obvious as you read these 5 verses that Paul's presumption is that these 1st c. Christians in S. Galatia were just that: Christians

Yet t/danger of apostasy--falling away from t/faith--has been a recurring theme up to this point – 1:6, 8-9.

May wonder why Paul doesn't just flat out say - “*Listen, you guys are demonstrating that you were never born again in the first place. You need to repent and come to true saving faith in X.*”

Rather, Paul seems to imply that he thinks they are converted.

That is the point: he does!

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

There's always t/reality that *some* if them aren't converted. No doubt some of them weren't. There are warnings in t/letter for them.

But as to t/CH (CH's) as a whole – Paul is optimistic.

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

2 Corinthians 13:5 Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves! 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 think that in our use of this verse we miss Paul's point.

Here we have another rhetorical ?

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

That ? grammatically implies a yes answer. Intended response would be, *"yes, we do recognize that we are justified, that we are in Christ and He in us."*

Paul's not defending justification here but rather his apostleship.

This response would invoke them to realize that the human agent behind their salvation was Paul. He was t/one who taught them t/Gospel.

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

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

Similar thing here in Galatians.

Not to say that every single one of them truly knew X.

And this passage (as well as 2 Cor. 13:5) applies for these also.

IOW – to tell a group of Xns that t/change in their lives is evidence of their salvation is to warn those who don't have that experience – you may very well not be converted.

[x] There is a Trinitarian structure here:

*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)

No doubt you have gone to a store or restaurant, paid your bill w/cash & prematurely began to head for the door when you heard t/words, “don't forget t/change!” That could be significant – especially if you paid for a 2 dollar item w/a 20 dollar bill!

Justification by Faith Alone: Don't Forget the Change

[xi] Outline

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?

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)

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

1. First Question: Who Duped You?

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

O foolish Galatians!

Sounds a little like 1:6 (“I am amazed you are so quickly deserting t/faith for a different G.”) – amazed is one thing – foolish is another!
Repeats it in v. 3 - “are you so foolish”

(1) Both times he uses the Greek noun ἀνόητος
“ἀνόητος . . . denotes the stupidity that arises from deadness and impotence of intellect.” [Wuest, Ga 3:1]

(a) This is mental flabbiness – something that is endemic in the church today

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]

We think Mormonism 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; imputation of X's righteousness to t/believer

We think people are born neutral or basically good & so misunderstand depravity.

CT - New Poll Finds Evangelicals' Favorite Heresies

Survey finds many American evangelicals hold unorthodox views on the Trinity, salvation, and other doctrines.

Kevin P. Emmert/ OCTOBER 28, 2014

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

A survey . . . by LifeWay Research for Ligonier Ministries “reveals a significant level of theological confusion,” said Stephen Nichols, Ligonier’s chief academic officer. Many evangelicals do not have orthodox views about either God or humans, especially on questions of salvation and the Holy Spirit, he said.

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.

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.

The Holy Spirit: May the Force Be with You?

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."

Salvation: Who Makes the First Move?

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 their own initiative. Yet half (54%) also think salvation begins with God acting first. So which is it?

In the fifth century, a British monk named Pelagius reportedly argued that people can choose God by the strength of their own will. Adam's sin, he taught, did not sabotage human freedom, so we still have the ability to choose and follow God by the strength of our will.

His school of thought, known as Pelagianism, was denounced at the Council of Carthage in 418 and later at the Council of Ephesus in 431. A variation, known as Semipelagianism, cropped up shortly thereafter, affirming original sin but teaching that humans take the initiative in salvation. The Council of Orange in 529 rejected Semipelagianism as heretical, maintaining that faith is a gift of God's grace and does not originate in ourselves.

The Council of Orange put it this way:

If anyone says that God has mercy upon us when, apart from his grace, we believe, will, desire, strive, labor, pray, watch, study, seek, ask, or knock, but does not confess that it is by the infusion and inspiration of the Holy Spirit within us that we have the faith, the will, or the strength to do all these things as we ought; 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). <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2014/october-web-only/new-poll-finds-evangelicals-favorite-heresies.html>

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

"To fail to learn is to learn to fail"

We are to think.

indignation and concern.

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)

I. First Question: Who Duped You?

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

a. In asking:

Who has bewitched you,

Paul is not saying that t/blame lies somewhere else.

O foolish Galatians!

blame lies with themselves.

b. Some see here a reference to Satan or to a single individual who was the ringleader of the Judaizing faction

τίς = who = singular

While Paul does appear to single out an unnamed individual in 5:10.

While we know that warnings about of t/deceitfulness of t/enemy abound (1 Pet 5:8; 2 Cor 11:3) I think it's more likely that, as a rhetorical ?, there's not really an answer.

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

βάσκαιν = to bewitch = Metaphor comes from a rather popular superstition of giving someone “the evil eye.”

Same word is used in the writings of Plato – The Phaedo (*feedoē*) :
“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)]

(1) Nuanced play on words or concepts

“to bewitch” = “the evil eye.”

. . . before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

(2) Vivid Picture!

Jesus Christ was placarded right before you eyes!

“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]

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.

One commentator:

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]

. . . before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as [having been] crucified?

Perfect Passive PTCP. 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?

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.

1. First Question: Who Duped You?

Timothy George:

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]

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)

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]