

Galatians Chapter 3

Verse 3

1. What a great question Paul asks:
 - "If the Spirit saved you from eternal condemnation and brought forgiveness and acceptance before God, do you think that now you are going to grow to Christian maturity (perfection) through the works of the flesh?"
 - "The flesh" refers to the performance and doing of the law.
2. It is a work of the Spirit that **saves** us, and it is a work of the Spirit that **grows** us.
 - Let this be a lesson: the doing and performing of rules, requirements, and laws does not bring spiritual growth. It simply brings pride, arrogance, and self-righteousness.
 - Spiritual growth comes as we are rightly related to Christ and His Spirit. As we humbly trust Him and abide in Him, He lives His life through us, and true spiritual growth occurs.
 - Spiritual maturity is not found in a plan, a program, a curriculum, or religious rules - it is found in a Person - Jesus Christ.
 - As we trust Him by faith in every situation and grow in our relationship with Him, we grow and mature spiritually.
3. We live the Christian life the same way we started it - by total faith and trust in Jesus Christ. **Colossians 2:6**
4. There are some who would readily admit that we are saved by grace through faith, but they believe that after salvation the law is our guide to show us how to live.
5. Nothing could be further from the truth. We have a resident inside of us Who guides and leads us as we yield to Him - the Spirit of Jesus Christ!
 - **1 Corinthians 1:24** declares, "*Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.*"
 - **Colossians 2:3** tells us that in Christ "*are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.*"
 - We do not need the law because we have the One who fulfilled the law living inside of us! We are married to another. **Romans 7:4**

Verse 4

1. Obviously, the Galatians had suffered persecution because of their new life in Christ (cf. 6:13). To get an idea of the volatile religious climate of this area, read **Acts 13:45, 50, 14:2, 4-5, 19**.
2. As they stood firmly in the cross and grace of Christ, it brought persecution from the enemies of the cross. This was a common theme in the letters that Paul wrote to churches and individuals. **Philippians 1:28-30; 1 Thessalonians 1:6, 2:14, 3:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:12-13**
3. Because Paul preached Christ and not religion, he suffered persecution. Paul called it "*the offence of the cross.*" Galatians 5:11 - The devil won't fight organized religion, but he hates the grace found in the cross of Christ.

4. Paul reminds the Galatians that they, too, had suffered because of the cross, and that this is no time to turn their backs on that grace now.
 - An illustration would be a soldier who is fighting for liberty and freedom and had suffered much for belief in these principles, and then turning his back on those principles and going AWOL.
 - This is what Paul is saying, "You've stood firmly for this grace and freedom in Christ and even suffered for it - you're going to turn tail and run, now?"