

Galatians Chapter 3

Verse 5

1. This appears to be a reference to how God worked through Paul among the Galatians on Paul's first missionary journey. God's Spirit had worked through Paul to do many miracles.
2. None of these miracles were done as a result of keeping the law and doing works of the law. They were done in response to simple faith. You can read about these miracles, signs, and wonders that God did through Paul in the Galatian region.
Acts 13:6-12, 14:3, 8-10
3. It is important to realize that the sign gifts were operable during the apostolic time period of Acts because God was still calling Israel to repentance. It is the Jews which require a sign. **1 Corinthians 1:22**
4. At the end of Acts (**28:25-29**), God turned from Israel. God's program with Israel was now being held in abeyance, but will resume when the dispensation of grace ends and the church is called out (**1 Thessalonians 4:14-18**).
 - At this point, God will resume His prophetic program with Israel (**Romans 11:25-27**) with its signs and wonders (**Revelation 11:3-12**).
5. Therefore, after the book of Acts, we see the sign gifts ceasing. The sign gifts (tongues, healing, etc.) are not mentioned in Paul's latter epistles, written after the closing of Acts. In fact, we see the opposite.
 - Timothy was sick often, and Paul suggested a practical remedy, not a miraculous healing. **1 Timothy 5:23**
 - Paul left his beloved fellow-laborer Trophimus sick at Miletum. **2 Timothy 4:20**
 - Paul was in prison in Rome, but there was no miraculous deliverance (like at Philippi - **Acts 16**), but he was resigned to the fact that He would die. **2 Timothy 4:6**
 - When Epaphroditus was sick to the point of death, there was no mention of a miraculous healing by Paul, but he simply says that God had mercy on him. It appears from the text that it was a lengthy sickness and that Paul was powerless to do anything about it, except to pray to God. **Philippians 2:25-30**

Verse 6

1. In this book of Galatians, the apostle Paul brilliantly lays out a defense of the gospel of grace through faith alone, without the works of the law.
2. To help prove his point, Paul now uses the father of the Jews - Abraham. The Jews took great pride in being physical descendants of Abraham (**John 8:33-40**).
3. But Paul reminds them in this verse that Abraham was justified through faith alone.
 - This is a reference from **Genesis 15:5-6**.
 - The word "accounted" is the same word as "imputed."
 - It means "to put to one's account."
4. Righteousness was put to Abraham's account before God. How did it happen?

5. **Romans 4** clearly reveals that it was through faith alone.
 - It was not through any works of the flesh - **vs. 1-5**
 - It was not through the sign of circumcision - **vs. 9-11**
 - It was not through the law - **vs. 13-16**
 - Abraham was justified (declared righteous) through faith in God's promise - **vs. 18-22**
6. This brings us to the issue of salvation in the Old Testament.
 - While we know that Old Testament saints did not have an understanding of the finished work of Christ, they received many promises from God.
Hebrews 11:11-17, 33
 - Salvation has always been a faith issue between a person's heart and God.
Hebrews 11:1-2, 6, 39
 - While the **content** of faith changes in the various dispensations, Old Testament saints' acceptance before God was still rooted in faith.
 - Their faith was then **expressed** in many different ways, depending on the revelation of God at that point and time. **Hebrews 11** is full of examples:
 - Abel's faith in God was expressed by offering a blood sacrifice. **vs. 4**
 - Noah's faith in God was expressed by building an ark. **vs. 7**
 - Moses' faith was expressed by refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter. **vs. 24**
 - Rahab's faith was expressed by receiving the spies with peace. **vs. 31**
 - Their works were simply the fruit of their faith. It was their faith that pleased God.
7. Abraham did not just believe **in** God, but rather he "**believed God**" - this means that he accepted God's Word and trusted His promise.
8. Nobody is saved by believing **in** God. The Bible teaches that the devils believe in God and tremble. **James 2:19**
 - We are saved by believing God - believing and trusting in what He has said.
 - You can believe in Dan Proctor (that I exist), but not believe Dan Proctor (things I say or promise).

Verse 7

1. The Jews liked to boast that they were the children of Abraham, but Paul shows that the true children of Abraham in God's eyes are those that are of faith.
2. The Bible teaches that Abraham is the father of all those that believe God, whether Jew or Gentile. **Romans 4:11-12, 16**
3. The Jewish legalists had probably boasted that they were the true children of Abraham by virtue of their law-keeping.
4. This verse is a stinging rebuke to the Judaizers. Paul shows that the true children of Abraham are those that are of faith.
5. We are not the children of Abraham by natural birth, but by faith in God's Word and God's promise.