

Sunday, February 19, 2023—Galatians 3:1-2 O Foolish Galatians

### Review

- If you recall from the introduction to this course, the book of Galatians can be divided into three sections.
  - Chapters 1-2—Personal Section
  - Chapters 3-4—Doctrinal Section
  - Chapters 5-6—Practical Section
- Today, as we begin Chapter 3, we are entering into the second section of the book. However, one should not assume that just because we are entering into a new section of the book, that everything Paul has said up to this point is not bearing on the doctrine he is going to lay out in Chapter 3.
- Galatians 1:6-9, 2:21—Paul has already established that a man cannot be justified by the works of the Law. No human effort or performance could ever justify anyone.

### Galatians 3:1

- **O foolish Galatians who hath bewitched you?**—the Greek word translated “foolish” in this verse means unintelligent according to *Strong’s Concordance*. Consider the other ways this word is used in the King James Bible:
  - Luke 24:25—Christ calls the disciples “fools” in this verse.
  - Romans 1:14—is calling someone unwise generally something that is going to be taken as a compliment?
  - Titus 3:1-3—before we got saved, we all were foolish in the eyes of God.
- Paul is essentially calling the Galatians a bunch of immoral, ignorant people who cannot even discern right from wrong.
- The word “bewitched” means to malign or fascinate by false representations. This is the only time the Greek word rendered “bewitched” is used in the New Testament. It is not, however, the only time the English word “bewitched” appears in the text.
- Our English word literally means to cast a spell over, or to magically charm someone. Noah Webster defined “bewitch” as follows in his *American Dictionary of the English Language*:

- To fascinate; to gain an ascendancy over by charms or incantation; an operation which was formerly supposed to injure the person bewitched, so that he lost his flesh, or behaved in a strange unaccountable manner; ignorant people being inclined to ascribe to evil spirits what they could not account for.  
Look, how I am bewitched; behold, mine arm

Is like a blasted sapling withered up.

1. To charm; to fascinate; to please to such a degree as to take away the power of resistance.

The charms of poetry our souls bewitch

2. To deceive and mislead by juggling tricks or imposter. Acts 8:9.

- The Greek word rendered “bewitch” in Acts 8 is a different word than the one in Gal. 3:1. This word is elsewhere translated “be amazed,” “be astonished,” “make astonished,” “wonder.”
- Who was it that came into the churches of Galatia and caused them to be fascinated and charmed by things that are not true? The Judaizers who told them that they needed to follow the Law.
- **that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?**
- Paul is not merely pronouncing them foolish but disobedient. Twice in Chapter 2, Paul states that the works of the Law cannot justify the believer.

- Galatians 2:16, 21

- So, by going back and trying to follow the Law, the Galatians were being disobedient.
- The Galatians allowed themselves to be “bewitched” away from the truth. The specific truth is contained at the end of the verse. They had once known the joy of the crucifixion as the only payment for their sin.
- The phrase, “hath been evidently set forth,” is a translation of a single Greek word. Paul depicted and set forth openly in front of the Galatians the truth of Christ’s crucifixion. Consider the other places this phrase appears.
  - Romans 15:4—“were written aforetime”
  - Ephesians 3:3—“as I wrote afore in few words”

- I Corinthians 15:3-5—Paul, no doubt, demonstrated to the Galatians that the facts of the gospel were according to the Scriptures.
- The bottom line is this: We cannot, with our filthy rags, improve upon what God says is perfect. If someone is following the Law today, they are in direct disobedience to the truth of the gospel.

### **Galatians 3:2**

- **This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?**
- Paul says, “okay you guys in Galatia, I have one question for you; did you receive the Holy Spirit by the works of the Law or by the hearing of faith?”
- Paul goes right to the heart of the controversy. They are either led by the Spirit of God or they are under the bondage of the Law, but the Holy Spirit did not lead them into Law keeping.
- Galatians 5:18—the Holy Spirit leads no man today to follow the Law.
- Romans 10:17—the only way they could have received the Spirit is through the hearing of faith.