



Lesson #6: Justification by Faith

Justification is being made right with God.

Study at a Glance: The 5 W's

KEY AREA	DETAILS AND SUMMARY
WHO (Author & Audience)	The Apostle Paul writing to the believers in Galatia. These believers are being misled by false teachers (Judaizers) who are insisting they must keep the Old Testament Law to be truly saved.
WHAT (Core Message)	We are justified (made right with God) completely by faith, not by works of the law. God's promise to Abraham was based on faith, and the law was only meant to be a temporary guardian until Christ arrived.
WHEN (Timing)	Written around AD 48-49. Paul references God's covenant with Abraham, pointing out that this promise of faith was established 430 years before the law was ever given to Moses.
WHERE (Location)	Sent to the churches in the region of Galatia.
WHY (Rationale)	To correct the false teaching that Christians must obey the Mosaic Law to earn God's approval, and to remind believers of the absolute freedom and righteousness found only in Christ's finished work.

Introduction

To be "justified" is a legal term. It means to be declared "not guilty" and to have a right standing before a judge. In our relationship with God, justification means that God looks at us just as if we had never sinned, completely forgiving us and covering us in the righteousness of Jesus. In the book of Galatians, the Apostle Paul is writing to a group of believers who are confused. False teachers had crept into the church, teaching that faith in Jesus wasn't quite enough to save them. They argued that to truly be right with God, believers also had to strictly follow the Old Testament rules. In Galatians 3, Paul passionately dismantles this idea, reminding them—and us—that we are justified entirely by faith from beginning to end.

Key Terms Defined

TERM	ORIGINAL WORD in Greek	PRONUNCIATION	DEFINITION (Contextual)	SCRIPTURE REFERENCE
Bewitched	Baskaino	bas-kah'-ee-no		Galatians 3:1
Righteousness	Dikaiosyne	dik-ah-yos-oo'-nay		Galatians 3:6
Curse	Katara	kat-ar'-ah		Galatians 3:10, 13
Redeemed	Exagorazo	ex-ag-or-ad'-zo		Galatians 3:13
Covenant	Diatheke	dee-ath-ay'-kay		Galatians 3:15, 17
Disannul	Akuroo	ak-oo-ro'-o		Galatians 3:17
Transgressions	Parabasis	par-ab'-as-is		Galatians 3:19
Schoolmaster	Paidagogos	pahee-dag-o-gos'		Galatians 3:24

SECTION 1: We Are Justified by Faith

(Read Galatians 3:1-9)

Paul starts this chapter with strong words for the Galatian Christians. He questions their recent choices and asks them to remember how they first came to know God. To help them see their mistake, Paul points back to Abraham, a famous leader from the Old Testament. By looking at Abraham's life—long before God gave Moses the Ten Commandments—Paul shows what it really means to be part of God's family and how we are truly made right with Him.

Discussion Questions

1. Text Focus: How did the Galatians first receive the Holy Spirit? Why does Paul call them foolish now?
2. Application: Why is it so easy for us to feel like we have to "earn" God's love, even after He has already saved us by grace?

SECTION 2: Redeemed from The Law's Curse

(Read Galatians 3:10-18)

Paul just explained that faith is the foundation of our relationship with God. Now, he gives a strong warning to anyone trying to be saved by following the rules. He explains that relying on the law actually puts a person under a curse. He contrasts this heavy burden with what Jesus did for us. Paul also looks at history, comparing when God made His promise to Abraham with when He gave the law to Moses, to show which one is more important.

Discussion Questions

1. Text Focus: How did Jesus rescue us from the curse of the law? According to verses 13-14, why did He do this?
2. Application: If we are made right with God by His promise, and not by following rules, why should we still want to live a holy and obedient life?

SECTION 3: The Law Points to Christ

(Read Galatians 3:19-25)

Paul's teaching brings up a big question: If the law cannot save us, why did God give the law to Moses in the first place? He explains the specific job the law was meant to do, and he shows how our relationship with the law changes once we put our faith in Jesus.

Discussion Questions

1. Text Focus: What was the real purpose of the law, and how long was it supposed to last?
2. Application: If the law is like a mirror that shows us our mistakes and points us to Jesus, how should we treat ourselves when we fail? How should we treat others who do not know Christ yet?

Conclusion

Being made right with God through faith is the core of the Gospel. If we could save ourselves by being good people or following rules, then Jesus died for nothing. We have to be careful not to fall into the trap of thinking God's love changes based on how well we perform. You are not made right by what you *do* for God; you are made right by what Jesus *has already done* for you. Rest in what Christ has done, knowing that through faith, you are completely right with God.