

Am I living by faith?

Galatians 3:1-14

Context:

- Gospel : Justified by faith in Christ Jesus who was crucified for us, and not by works of the Law (2:16)
- “If righteousness could be gained through the Law, Christ died in vain” (2:21)
- Paul continued the discussion of faith and Law ...did Christ die in vain for Galatians?

- You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ² I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard? ³ Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? ⁴ Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain? ⁵ So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard?

Paul's concern

- Having begun in faith, experienced the Spirit and miracles by faith, they were in danger of finishing under Law.
- He appealed to them from their experience and from the Scripture

Gospel they believed: Christ was crucified

- Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified (3:1)
- they were crucified with Him and had begun to live by faith (2:20)
- Gospel was preached to them during Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13,14)
- Galatian churches: Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe

At Pisidia Antioch

For this is what the Lord has commanded us: “‘I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.’” When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and honored the word of the Lord; and all who were appointed for eternal life believed. The word of the Lord spread through the whole region.

Acts 13:47-49

- Paul and Barnabas faced persecution and went to Iconium (13:50-51)
- The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit(13:52)



A great multitude, both of the Jews
and also of the Greeks, believed.

Acts 14:1

warrencampdesign.com

Iconium



Acts 14:8-10

Paul called out to the lame-from-birth man,
“Stand up on your feet!” The man was healed.

warrencampdesign.com

Lystra

- Paul was stoned at Lystra despite the miracle(14:19), so he and Barnabas went to Derbe (14:20)
- At Derbe...many believed the gospel



They preached the gospel in that city and won a large number of disciples. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. “We must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God,” they said.

Acts 14:21-22 NIV

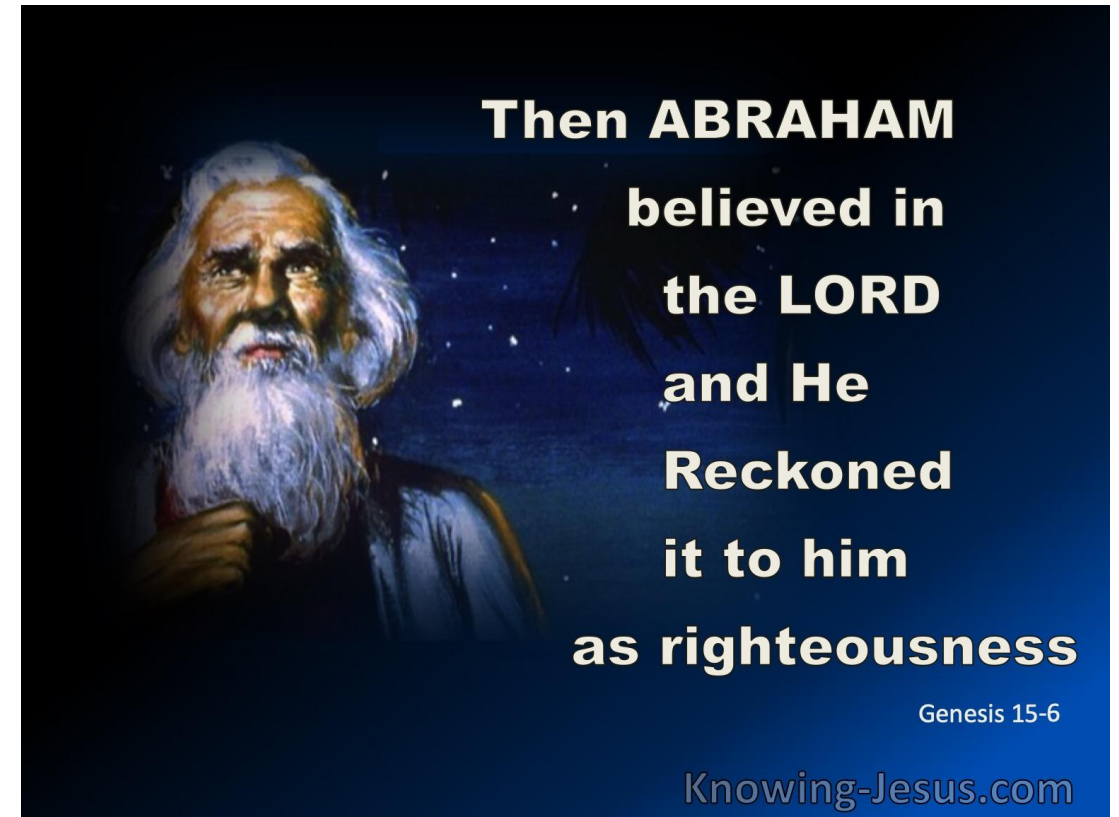
Their own experience:

- Foolish Galatians...repeated (3:1,3)
- To shock them into awareness of the deception
- By faith they believed Christ crucified(3:1), and experienced the Spirit and miracles (3:2)
- Were deceived(1:6-7)
- danger of abandoning their faith for the Law (3:3-5)

Evidence from Scripture

- ⁶ So also Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness. (Genesis 15:6)
- ⁷ Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. ⁸ Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.” ⁹ So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith. (Genesis 12:3)

- And Abram said, “You have given me no children; so a servant in my household will be my heir.”
- Then the word of the LORD came to him: “This man will not be your heir, but a son who is your own flesh and blood will be your heir.” He took him outside and said, “Look up at the sky and count the stars—if indeed you can count them.” Then he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.” (Genesis 15:3-5)



Abraham's faith(Romans 4)

- Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed and so became the father of many nations... Without weakening in his faith, he faced the fact that his body was as good as dead—since he was about a hundred years old—and that Sarah's womb was also dead (4:18-19)
- Infertile and ageing: impossible to conceive a baby

- Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that God had power to do what he had promised. This is why “it was credited to him as righteousness.” The words “it was credited to him” were written not for him alone, but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead.(4:20-24)
- By faith...fully persuaded in God’s sovereign power when facing the impossible.

Credited for righteous by faith

Abraham

- Impossible conception
- Believed that God could do as promised
- Received the promise...Isaacs /nation of Israel

Galatians /Us

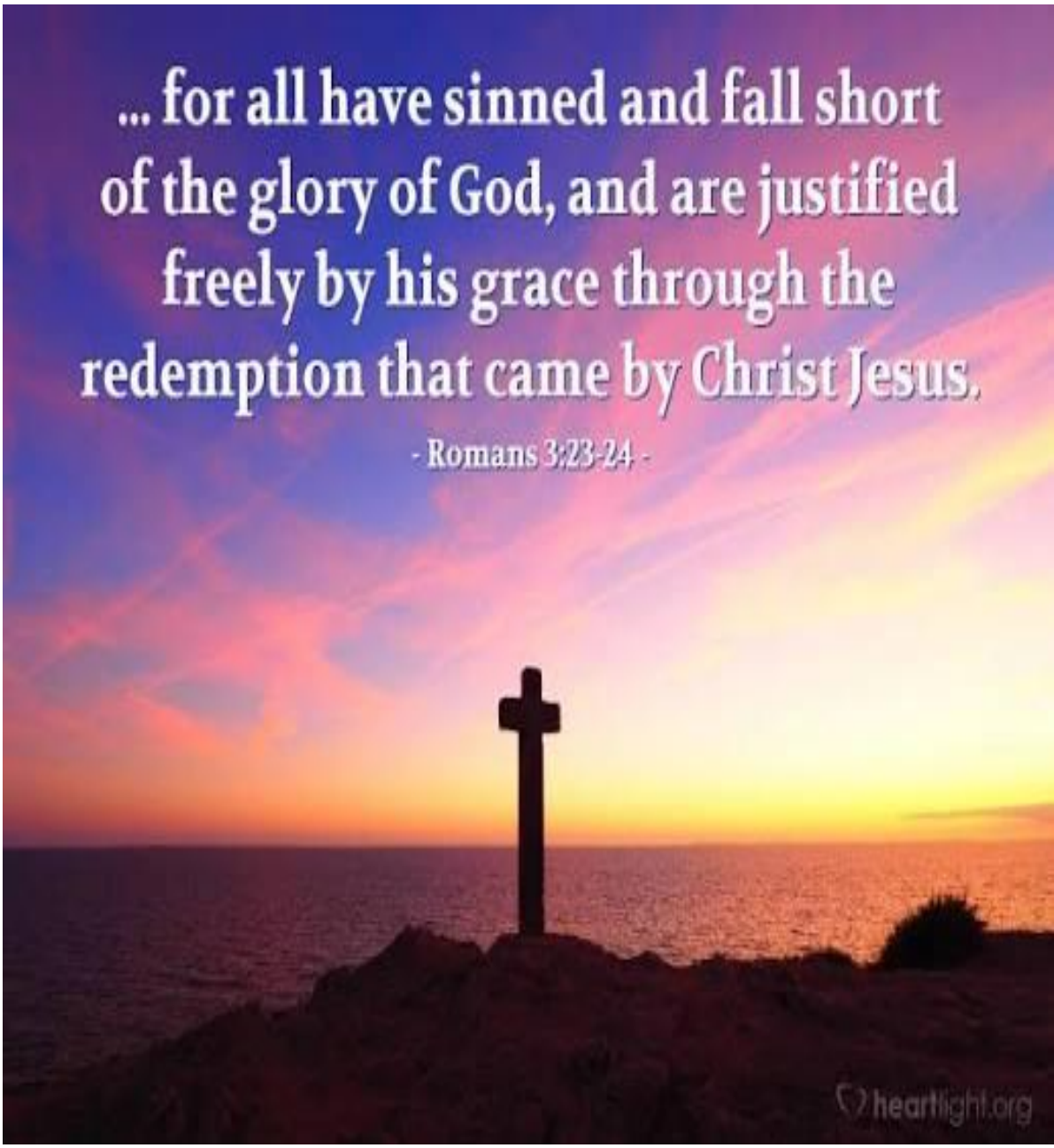
- Impossible to be saved under Law
- Believed God who raised Jesus from the dead
- Received the promise of salvation

Rely on Law (3:10-12)

- ¹⁰ For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.” ¹¹ Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.” ¹² The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.”

Rely on the Law (3:10-12)

- Under a curse (3:10)
- ‘Cursed is the one who doesn’t uphold the words of this Law and observe them.’ (Deuteronomy 27:26)
- Whoever live by the Law will be judged under the Law (3:12)
- No one is justified by the Law (3:11)
- **Fact: No one can fully obey the Law because all have sinned (Romans 3:23)**

A photograph of a wooden cross standing on a rocky shore, silhouetted against a vibrant sunset sky with orange, pink, and purple hues. The ocean is visible in the background.

... for all have sinned and fall short
of the glory of God, and are justified
freely by his grace through the
redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

- Romans 3:23-24 -

- No matter how good or moral we are...still sin and fall short of God's righteousness standard.
- Justified freely by grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

Live by faith (3:13-14)

- ¹³ Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.” ¹⁴ He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Live by faith...redemption:

- Christ has redeemed us from the curse...becoming a curse for us (3:13)
- 'Cursed is everyone who is hung on the pole' (Deuteronomy 21:23)
- Redeemed us to fulfill the promise given to Abraham that blessing might come to Gentiles through Christ Jesus by faith and we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (3:14)

Because of redemption



- “the righteous shall live by faith”(3:11)
- Rallying cry of the Protestant reformation movement of the 16th century

Martin Luther

- With gratitude and with a sure confidence, therefore, let us accept this doctrine...which teaches that Christ became a curse for us, that is, a sinner worthy of the wrath of God; that He clothed Himself in our person, laid our sins upon His own shoulders, and said: "I have committed the sins that all men have committed." Therefore He truly became accursed according to the Law, not for Himself but, as Paul says, *for us*.
- "I have committed David's adultery, Peter's denial and
....."

Relation of Faith to Law

- Faith preceded the Law and was superior(3:17-20)
- Reason for the law (3:19)
- Law as a temporary guardian /custodian(3:24,29)

Relation of faith to Law

- What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise (3:17)
- Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator. A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one.(3:19-20)

Faith preceded the Law

- Abraham was considered righteous by his faith(3:6/ Gen 15:6)...while he was still uncircumcised (Romans 4:11)
- Preceded Mosaic Law by 430 years (3:17)

AND HE RECEIVED THE SIGN OF
CIRCUMCISION AS A SEAL OF THE
RIGHTEOUSNESS THAT HE HAD BY FAITH
WHILE HE WAS STILL UNCIRCUMCISED. SO
THEN, HE IS THE FATHER OF ALL WHO
BELIEVE BUT ARE NOT CIRCUMCISED, IN
ORDER THAT RIGHTEOUSNESS MIGHT BE
CREDITED TO THEM.

- ROMANS 4:11

Faith was superior to Law

- Law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator(Moses) to expose sin until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come (3:19-20)
- Seed refer to the promised Messiah, Jesus Christ

- Faith came by Jesus Christ Himself...no mediator

Therefore,

- Faith was superior to the Law

Reason for the Law

- ²¹ Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. ²² But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

- The Law is not opposed to the promises of God
- Added to expose sin as transgression/offence against God...we are dead in sin
- Show the futility of the Law to impart righteousness /to save
- Only through what was promised...faith in Jesus Christ can save

Under Guardian

- ²⁴ So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.
- God's plan was always for faith.
- The Law was to prepare for the right moment when Christ came to justify by faith.
- In Christ we are Abraham's seed...heirs of the promise (3:29)

Lesson

Gospel living is by faith

- Must begin and finish by faith.
- We are saved by God's grace, through faith alone.
- We obey Christ by faith (not to earn salvation).

Jesus's take on the Law



¹⁷ "Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them. ¹⁸ For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.

MATTHEW 5:17–20

ESV

- He came under the Law to fulfill it's requirements and took our curse
- He redeemed the Law for us...sermon on the Mount

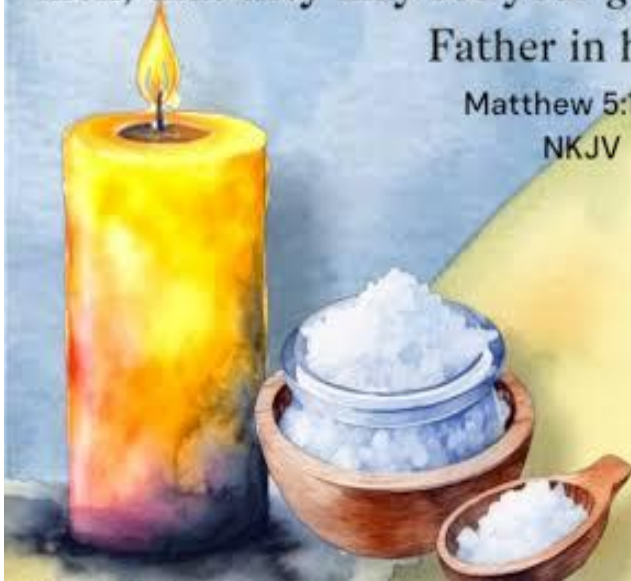
- Obey the principles or spirit of the Law as Jesus taught in the Sermon on the mount.
- Murder, adultery, divorce, oaths, eye for eye...
- Charity/giving, prayer and fasting...in secret
- Obey in secret for our Father to see, not men (hypocrisy of Pharisees condemned)
- No contradiction between our faith and Jesus teaching.
- Obedience is required

You are the salt & light...

¹³“You are the salt of the earth; but if the salt loses its flavor, how shall it be seasoned? It is then good for nothing but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot by men.¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hidden.¹⁵Nor do they light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house.¹⁶ Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:13-16
NKJV

Glorify
your
Father in
heaven



- Jesus's teaching enable us to be a good witness to our family, colleagues and friends (Rev Dr Daniel Chua)
- To glorify our Father in heaven



Matthew 7:24-25

24 Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock.

25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

His teachings:

- Solid foundation to weather the many difficult “storms of life”.
- Guide and provide solution to our questions and doubts
- Essential to read and study the Word to build this foundation

Faith like Abraham:



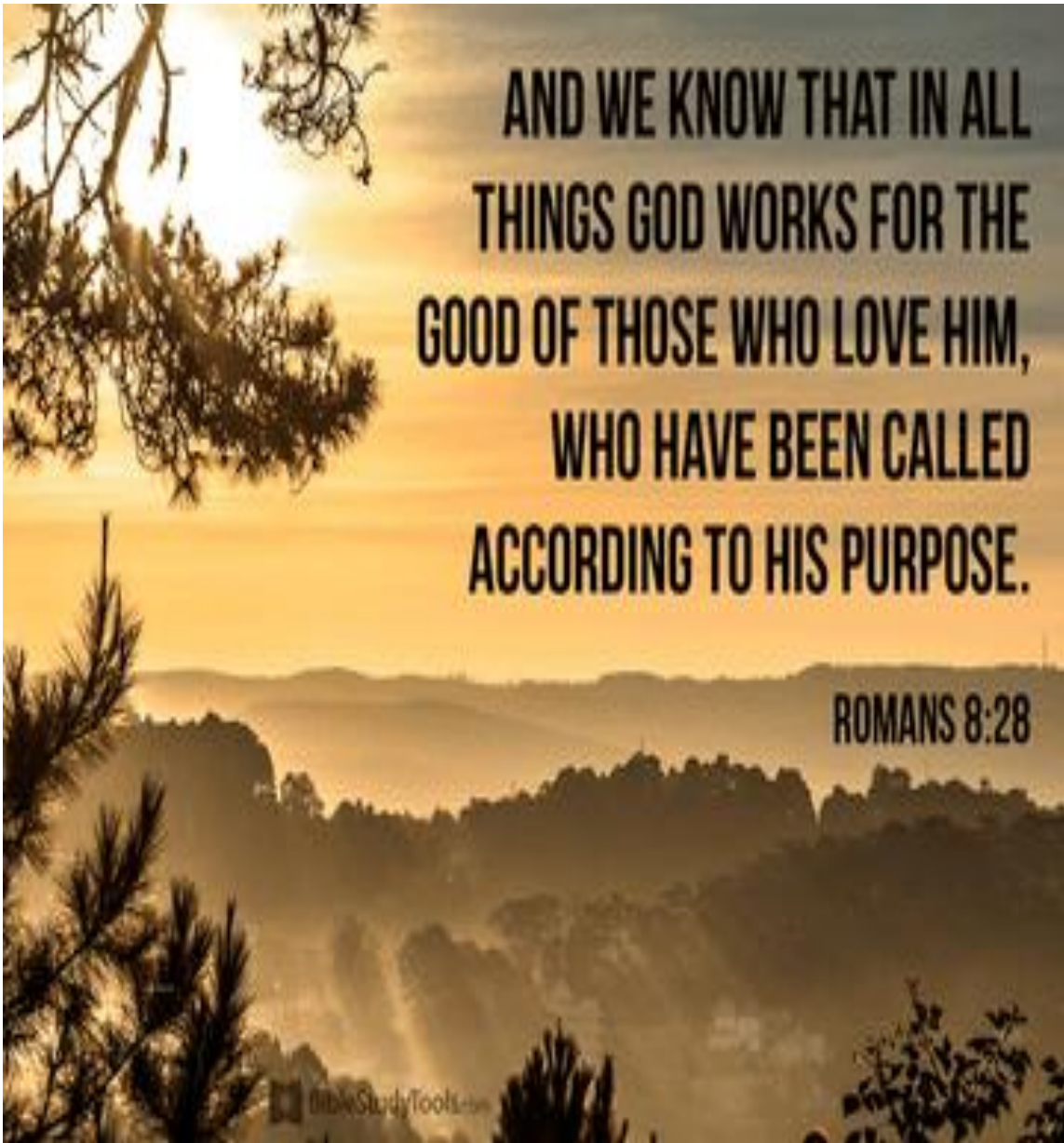
Romans
4:22

because he was fully convinced that what He had promised He was also able to perform Therefore, it was credited to him for righteousness

His faith was credited to him for righteousness

Knowing-Jesus.com

- Fully convicted that God was able to keep His promise even in impossible circumstance.
- Believe that God exist and He rewards those who seek Him (Hebrews 11:6)



AND WE KNOW THAT IN ALL
THINGS GOD WORKS FOR THE
GOOD OF THOSE WHO LOVE HIM,
WHO HAVE BEEN CALLED
ACCORDING TO HIS PURPOSE.

ROMANS 8:28

 Bible Study Tools

- God worked out His purpose through Abraham even though his body was 'dead'
- He can still work out for good according to His purpose in our 'difficult' situations...trust Him

Bible is God's one story

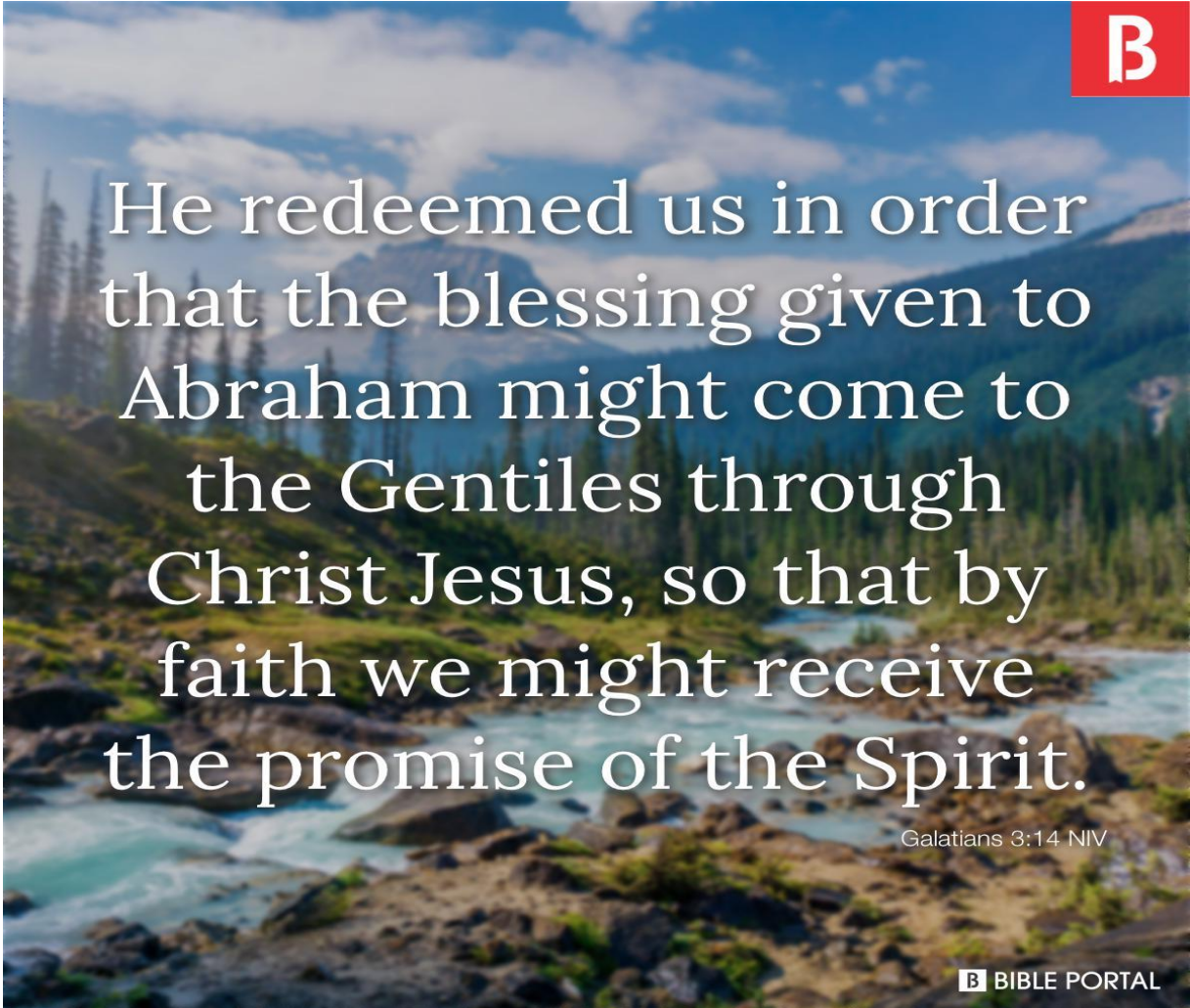
- God's plan in both Old and New Testament are closely link...is one plan
- Abrahamic promise of blessing were fulfilled through Jesus Christ. The Law was given because of sins, and in anticipation of the coming promised Messiah.
- Need to read both Testaments to understand the complete plan of God.

Application

- What is gospel?
- What does the gospel require?
- Which life do we chose? By faith or by Law?

What is the gospel?

- Fulfillment of the promise given to Abraham by faith
- The Law cannot save or make us right before God... neither can church attendance, rules and rituals



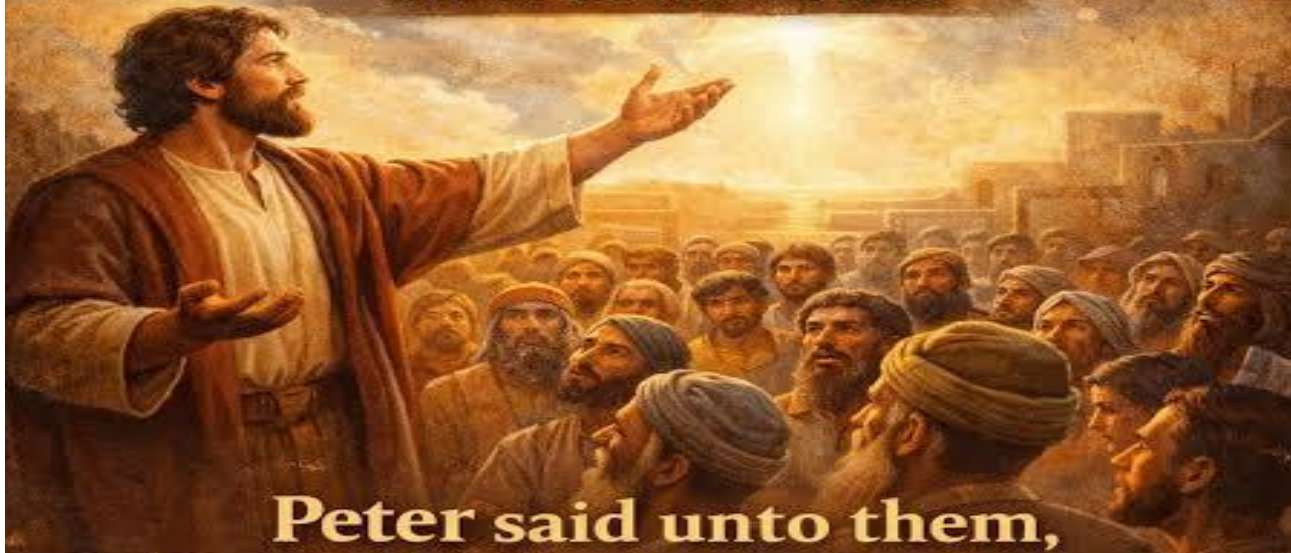
He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.

Galatians 3:14 NIV

Acts 2:36–38

“God hath made that same Jesus,
whom ye have crucified, both
Lord and Christ.”

“MEN AND BRETHREN,
WHAT SHALL WE DO?”



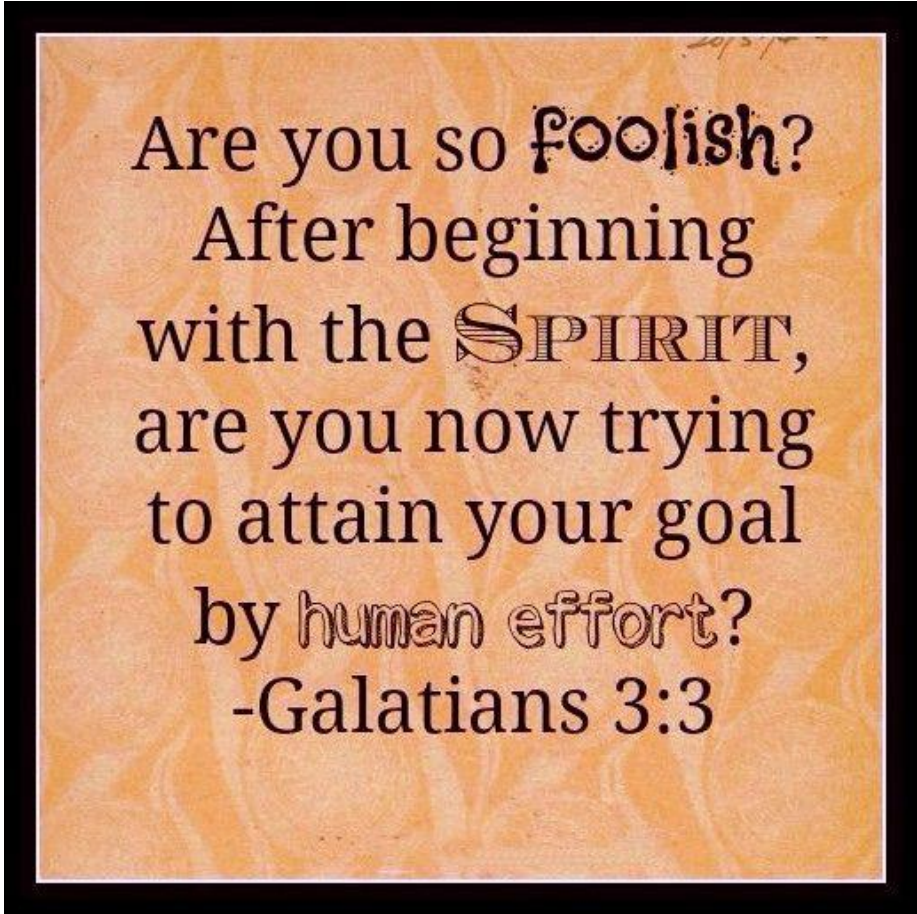
Peter said unto them,
“Repent, and be baptized every one of
you in the name of Jesus Christ for the
remission of sins; and ye shall receive
the gift of the Holy ~Ghost.”

• Acts 2:36–38 •

- Jesus is both Lord and Messiah (Acts 2:36)
- Received forgiveness of sins and the Spirit in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38)
- Have you receive Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?

What does the Gospel require?

- Must begin, continue and complete the journey by faith
- Faith is not blind, but based on Scripture promises and by experience with God
- Obedience to God's word is with the Spirit, not human effort

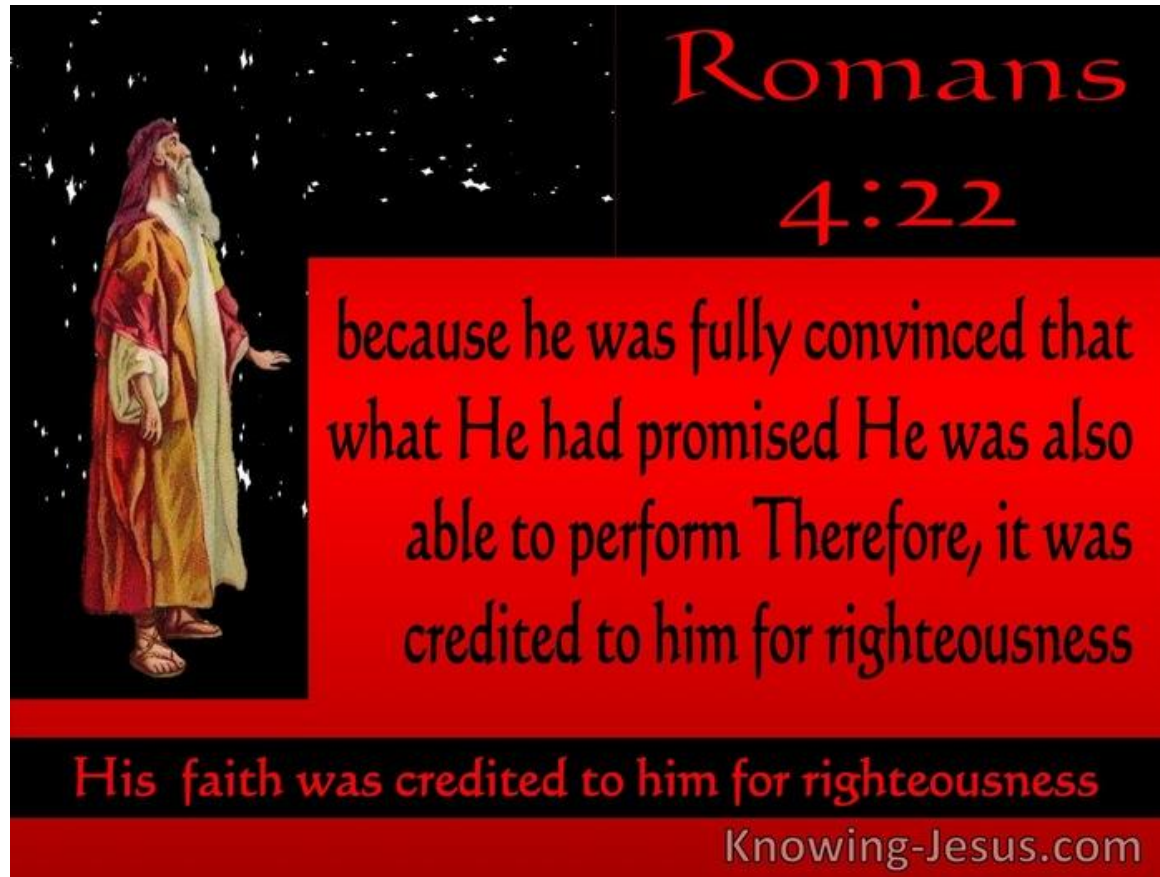
A rectangular frame with a thick black border. Inside, the background is a light orange or tan color with a subtle, swirling marbled pattern. The text is written in a dark, serif font, centered within the frame.

Are you so foolish?
After beginning
with the SPIRIT,
are you now trying
to attain your goal
by human effort?
-Galatians 3:3

Martin Luther...warning

- Important to live by faith as if there is no Law.
- Important to fix our eyes on the Crucified Christ our Savior and turn away from Law
- Sinful nature has a natural tendency to draw our attention and interest to the Law
- Lead to religion and not a relationship with Christ

Chose to live by faith



- Be fully persuaded about God's faithfulness
- God's faithfulness to His trusting children is unwavering, and He is faithful in holding to His purpose (Streams in the Desert, page 387)

Are you persuaded?