

Salvation by Faith

4th - 6th Grade
Lesson 9

Without the Law

This lesson is about salvation. Paul wrote a letter to the Christians in a city called Galatia. This letter he wrote is in the Bible. We call it the book of Galatians. Galatians is about salvation. Paul's letter to these Galatian people was explaining what salvation is. He did not want them to be confused.

Many people say that salvation is something different than it really is. They say that you can be saved only if you do good works. Some people say that you can be saved if you keep a lot of rules. These things are not what the Bible says. Salvation has always been by faith in Jesus Christ. Trusting in Jesus alone is the only thing that can get a person to heaven.

In this series, we learned that Jesus Christ was the last offering for sin. Do you remember what we learned about the offerings that people had to make in the Old Testament? Even though God had His people give offerings, in the end, they were justified by their faith, just like we are today.

And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.

—Genesis 15:3-6

The Bible says that Abraham was justified because of his faith. He wasn't justified because he obeyed the law or offered sin offerings.

Abraham believed that someday Jesus was going to come. Jesus explained this to His disciples so that they wouldn't be confused.

For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.

—Hebrews 10:1-4

The book of Hebrews tells us that salvation has never been about justification by works, and the whole book of Galatians was written to explain to us how salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ alone.

Salvation Without the Works of the Law

I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ.

—Galatians 1:6-7

Even though the Galatians hadn't been saved very long, they were already looking for "another" salvation. By "another" they wanted "a different kind." Paul was amazed that the people were willing to give up so easily on what they knew to be true. Paul told them that anyone who said that salvation was anything different should be "accursed."

Growing in Grace Without the Works of the Law

O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?

—Galatians 3:1-3

Some of the Galatians thought that they were saved by grace, but that they had to grow in grace all by themselves. This was a wrong way to think. Paul told the Galatians that the law was to show us how we needed Jesus. But God wants us to grow as Christians. He does not want us to have to go back to the Old Testament laws.

Conclusion

Many churches today teach that salvation is something we have to work for. Many preachers tell people that they must do good works like giving money and going to church so that they can go to heaven. This is not true. Some people say that no one can know for sure how to get to heaven. This, too, is false. The Bible shows us very clearly how we can know that we're going to heaven. It is not by works that we do on our own. We can't go to heaven because we try to be good. We can't go to heaven because we go to church or pray. We can go to heaven only by believing in God's only Son, Jesus Christ.