

(Galatians) Blessed Like Abraham

by Brian Brodersen

Paul's sermon to the Galatians emphasizes the importance of justification by faith, using the example of Abraham to show that salvation is based on faith, not works of the law.

Duration: 51:55

Topics: "Christian Liberty", "Faith And Works"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of living in the freedom and liberty that God has given us through Jesus Christ. He encourages believers to enjoy their salvation and have a personal relationship with God, rather than being burdened by religious rules and regulations. The preacher uses the example of Abraham to illustrate a life of faith and trust in God. He also highlights the contrast between a life of freedom in the Spirit and a life bound by legalism. The sermon emphasizes the need to accept God's salvation through faith and to cooperate with Him in living a joyful and fulfilling life.

Transcript

Amen. All right, let's turn to Galatians chapter 3. As we continue our study through Paul's epistle to the Galatians, in Galatia, Paul had experienced great success in furthering the kingdom of God. Many in the region had come to faith in Christ and the church was flourishing.

Into this blessed environment, this environment where the spirit was moving and people were rejoicing and souls were being saved and people were being just blessed, into this environment came the Judaizers. Men of the Pharisaic party who refused to believe that God would accept Gentiles into his kingdom, Gentiles, non-Jews. They had come to Galatia denying Paul's apostolic authority, contradicting Paul's gospel and insisting that Gentile Christians become Jews in order to really be saved.

The sad thing is that many in the Galatian churches fell for it. It's understandable that this sort of attack would come because when God's moving and the spirit is working and blessing is occurring, the enemy is always looking for some opportunity to counter. The enemy is always looking for some way in to interfere with what is going on.

So we can understand these guys infiltrating and trying to disrupt, but the hard thing to understand is how the Galatians so easily fell for it. They just took hook, line, and sinker. Their whole rap, their whole criticism of Paul and his gospel and all of those things, they just bought into it.

And Paul himself can't believe it. He loved these people, he had established these churches, he had taught them and grounded them in the faith, and he just cannot believe what's happened. And so after having shared with them his testimony as a way of sort of defending his apostolic calling, he now comes down to really deal with their attack, the Judaizers, to deal with their attack against the gospel itself, and he's going to show them that they've been duped.

But he says to them, he says, oh foolish Galatians, oh foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? Paul just says, oh, you're so foolish. How is it? Who has bewitched you? Who has cast this spell upon you? And you know, in reality, when a person who is a Christian is led astray into false teaching, it is truly the result of a spell. It's a demonic spell.

You see, Satan, he's after us. Satan wants to trip you up. He wants to lead you astray.

And if he can't get you one way, he'll try to get you another. If you slip out of his grasp by putting your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, he doesn't leave you alone at that point. He then will come along and try to lead you astray in some way, shape, or form.

And there is a demonic sort of a thing that happens there, a delusion, like a spell being cast and people come under the influence. It's a demonic influence. And over the years in the ministry, I have seen people who have come under a spell.

People who had been saved and people who were just, you know, loving God and they were growing and good things were happening in their life. But as time went on and maybe some difficulties arose and maybe some challenges and maybe some things that they didn't expect or whatever the case, maybe their hearts became a little bit hardened and the enemy then begins to really work and comes in and tries to bring other influences. And I have seen many people over the years be led astray, come under a spell, bewitched, as Paul referred to the Galatians being.

I think of a number of people that suddenly came under the spell of Calvinism and that's all they wanted to then talk about. That's all they could think about. Fellowship around the person of Jesus was no longer the issue.

Now it's limited atonement. God doesn't love everybody. Jesus didn't die for every person.

God only loves the elect. Jesus only died for a select group of people. And God's sovereignty is what it's all about, man.

And if you try to say that man has any part in his salvation, if you try to imply that man has a free will, you're out to lunch and you don't know the real gospel. And now we're on a campaign. We're on a campaign to educate everybody and to show everybody that they've been duped and that the real gospel is Calvinism.

And I've seen many, many people swept up into it. And it's, it's a spell. They come under a spell.

They're different people. You can't have a normal conversation with them. You can't even talk to them about the things of the spirit that you might've once been able to enjoy together with them because they're just so concerned with the of God, they say, and, and making sure you understand the sovereignty of God.

I mean, they're, they're on a mission, but, but it's a spell. The focus is no longer on Jesus. He's no longer the center, but now it's the glory of God.

They say, and we're talking about God's glory. And it's so sad and so tragic. And I've seen many, but you know what happens.

And I've seen it firsthand. The enemy comes in when people grow cold in their love for Christ himself, when they sort of, you know, the, the newness of, of their Christian experience kind of wears off the novelty is passed. And, and that initial love for Jesus has sort of begun to dissipate a bit.

And in a sense, I've seen that happen many times with people who have sort of become bored with their Christianity. They're bored with their Christianity. And now here's a new thing, something new and appealing to the flesh because man, after all, I'm one of the elect and not only am I one of the elect, but I know the truth that other people don't know.

And so what happens is now subtly I'm, I'm lifted up with pride because in my own mind, I know the truth. And I'm one of the select group that gets to know this stuff, but it's a spell. It's a bewitching and all the simplicity and the love and the joy and everything that was there initially, just in that relationship with Jesus, it vanishes and it's replaced now with all this lofty theology and it's replaced with this hypercritical spirit.

And every Christian that doesn't know the reformed faith is inferior is a sub Christian because after all, they don't really know the true gospel. And so as Paul had experienced this with the Galatians, I think everyone in pastoral ministry is probably experienced to some degree or another, this kind of a thing where people come under some sort of a delusion, some kind of a bewitching, some sort of a spell cast upon them. And you look at them and you just can't believe it.

And that's just one example. There are, there are many other examples, but not, not only with doctrinal kinds of things, but of course people can come under delusion in the area of behavior as well. People coming under the delusion that somehow God is condoning their lifestyle that is clearly forbidden in the scriptures.

I have, I have seen situations where a woman leaves her husband for another man and in this new relationship, they're praying together. They're reading the Bible together. They're talking about how God works all things together for good.

Even our sins, he's working together for good and, and he's going to bless this relationship. It's a spell. It's a bewitching.

It's a delusion. People are coming under those kinds of things even more and more, I think in these days. But Paul's word is, Oh, foolish Galatians.

How could you be so foolish to embrace these kinds of things, to believe that this could possibly be the case. And in their particular case, of course, they were dismissing the significance of the death of Christ. Remember back in the second chapter at the end of the second chapter there, Paul said, I do not frustrate the grace of God.

I do not set the grace of God aside for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain. What he's saying to them is if you go down the road, you're heading down. Then basically what you're

saying is that the death of Christ means nothing.

And so he says, who's bewitched you who's brought you under their spell. Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified. That was Paul's message when he had come to them.

He preached Christ crucified. If there was anything that they should have known, they should have known that their salvation was based on what Jesus did on the cross and on nothing else. But they're setting it all aside and they're embracing this legalism that's been brought by the Judaizers.

Now, Paul goes and he asked them a series of pointed questions, challenging questions. He says this only I want to learn from you. Did you receive the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? What was your experience? They did receive the spirit, but was it by the works of the law or was it by the hearing of faith? Of course, they would have to answer.

It was by the hearing of faith because they had never heard of the law in this sense that the Judaizers were bringing it to him at this point. Paul didn't preach that to him. He preached Christ and him crucified as the basis for their salvation.

And through that, they received the spirit. The spirit of God was working in their lives and in their midst as a congregation of people. He says, are you so foolish having begun in the spirit? Are you now being made perfect by the flesh? You've begun in the spirit.

It's like, you know, you've started up here. Are you going to be perfected by going back down to this level? That wouldn't make any sense whatsoever. If you've received all that God has through the spirit, how are you going to add to that through the flesh? Having begun in the spirit, are you going to be made perfected by the flesh? The spirit of God's done this great work in your life.

Now, do you think that your feeble activity is going to enhance that? Your feeble activity is going to somehow make that better or more acceptable to God? He says, have you suffered so many things in vain, if indeed it was in vain? Therefore, he who supplies the spirit to you and works miracles among you, does he do it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? So see, here's a church that, man, these people are experiencing the power of God in their midst. Miracles were happening. The spirit, the spirit, there was a supply of the spirit.

There were extraordinary things that had gone on in their midst to confirm the reality of their salvation in their own lives, of course, the great transformations that would have taken place. But I would imagine there were healings and there were miraculous kinds of things going on. Paul implies that here.

But he asked him this question. It's God who supplies the spirit and he works miracles among you. Does he do it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? All of this had been happening from the very beginning, is Paul's inference.

And it had nothing to do with the works of the law. But you see, what actually would have happened is all of that would have ceased the moment they began to turn toward a works mentality. All of that freedom, all of that liberty, all of that power and that joy that would come along with it.

It was just what God was doing because the people were simply believing him, loving him. It was just a wonderful free atmosphere. And God was moving powerfully.

But suddenly these guys come in and they just the spirit would have been quenched by their very presence, especially when the Galatians began to buy into it. You know, these were the kind of people, these Judaizers, they would come in and they see that God was doing something and then they'd stand back, you know, and sort of inspect it and then begin to challenge it and begin to question it, begin to deny that it was really God working, because after all, you know, God doesn't work that way. And there are plenty of Judaizers in our present generation and there always have been.

God's doing a great work and then the inspectors come in and they start to critically analyze what's going on. And because we've never seen this happen before, this can't be of God. People who have fallen into the traditional rut and now they can't see God doing anything beyond what they had seen him do maybe, you know, 25 years ago.

And because this is something different, fresh and new, they just can't embrace it. Instead, they're critical of it. And then they want it all to stop and everything's got to come under their control.

It's been repeated over and over again. Back in the early days of the ministry here, when God was pouring out his spirit all over Southern California and really in many other places all over the world. But what was going on here was so radical.

All these young people getting saved from the counterculture and all, you know, the baggage that went along with them, the way they looked and just their lifestyles and everything else. And the churches, many of the existing churches at the time, they just, they couldn't, they couldn't see it. They couldn't embrace it.

They couldn't handle it. They'd look at it and say, no, this can't be of God. And you've heard the stories about all the people that were warned by their pastor.

Don't go to Calvary Chapel. It's a cult and they're doing weird stuff to the kids down there. They're brainwashing them.

And like John Corson says, when he was a student at Biola and in his Baptist church, that's all he needed to hear was for the pastor, tell him not to go to Calvary. And that's certainly the place that he would end up as quick as he could get there. Just that human tendency.

If somebody says don't do it, well, I'm going to go find out for myself. Why not? And then he got brainwashed. Look, look what happened to him.

But it's the same. My point is this, it's the same sort of a thing, you know, and it's important as we're going through these epistles, you know, we want to understand what was happening at the time, but we want to realize that this has application today because the same kind of thing happens today. It happens over and over again.

It just sort of history repeats itself. And in the church, it's true. History repeats itself as well.

And so Paul is challenging them. And he says, just as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Now, you see what the Judaizers would do is they would throw the name of Moses around.

Moses was their man. Of course, Moses wasn't really he wouldn't have owned them, but they latched themselves onto Moses. And remember, during the ministry of Jesus, it was Moses that they were

constantly comparing Jesus with.

Moses told us to do this. What do you say? We're Moses's disciples. We're not this man's disciple, they would say.

And so they would always make reference to Moses. Paul, he's sharp. He's going to go one better than Moses.

He's going to go back to Abraham. Abraham is the father of the nation. Moses was the great lawgiver, yes, but it all began with Abraham.

And Paul says that the spirit supplied to you and the miracles wrought among you were wrought by the hearing of faith just as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Therefore, know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. You see, these guys were coming in and they were saying, you know, you can't really be saved unless you become Jews according to the Mosaic law.

You've got to be circumcised and you've got to keep the law. Paul goes beyond Moses. He goes back to Abraham and he says, know that only those who are of faith are the sons of Abraham.

He's saying to the Galatians, you really want to be part of this thing? You want to be in there with Abraham? You want to be in there with the Jews? Well, know this, only those who are of faith are part of it. These guys aren't really part of it. They're deceivers and they're trying to deceive you.

They're trying to suck you in. But Abraham is our example. What God did with Abraham and how God justified Abraham becomes a picture of how God would justify men.

And so the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preach the gospel to Abraham beforehand saying in you, all the nations shall be blessed. So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham. You see, Paul say, no, it's by faith.

It always has been a faith. Abraham, it's in him that all the families of the earth would be blessed in his way of justification. God foreseeing that he would justify the Gentiles by faith.

You see, Abraham was justified by faith. God appeared to Abraham. He took him out.

He showed him the stars. And he said, your descendants are going to be like that. And we read in Genesis 15, six and Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness.

Abraham was justified by faith. He just believed in the promise of God. He believed what God said.

And that's what got Abraham his right standing with God. Now, Paul says, that's a picture of how God would justify man. Just the way he justified Abraham is the same way that he justifies everybody by faith.

And so the gospel comes to us and the gospel tells us that Christ died for us. He took our sins upon himself. He paid the penalty for our sin and he rose again from the dead.

And God says, do you believe that? And when you say, yes, I believe that it's accounted to you for righteousness. You're justified at that moment. Now, we talked a little bit about justification in the previous study, but I want to talk a bit more about it this evening, because this is such an important, important topic.

And this is really the essence of the Christian message. It's justification by faith. And as I pointed out previously, this is the message that was lost through much of what we know as church history.

It's the message that was restored to some extent at the time of the reformation, but it's a message that still gets lost even today. And even in places where it's not totally lost, sometimes it's a bit fuzzy. It's a bit ambiguous.

Sometimes, even though people hear the terminology, they don't really understand exactly what it means. But we need to understand it because this is the essence of the gospel. Justification by faith means that God declares us to be righteous the moment we believe in Jesus Christ.

We're saved by believing in Jesus. We're declared to be righteous. Now, declared to be righteous means that God says we're righteous as a judge sitting there at his bench and he pronounces the verdict, not guilty.

And that's the way it is not guilty. That's the finding of the court. And so it is when we receive Christ, God pronounces us righteous, not guilty, not condemned, acquitted.

Now we use the term saved salvation, but we need to understand the full implication of salvation because that's what happens the minute we believe in Jesus. We're saved. We're justified.

But salvation has a past, a present and a future aspect to it. And in each one of those, you have a distinct theological term. The term for the past tense of salvation is justification.

And so in the past tense, I've been acquitted of my sins. My sins have been forgiven. The guilt of my sin has been removed.

I've been justified. That's the past tense of salvation. But there's a present tense and the present tense is sanctification.

And what that means is I am being delivered from the power of sin. So I've been saved from the guilt of sin. I'm presently being delivered from the power of sin.

So I'm living now a life no longer bound in sin, no longer trapped by my old lifestyle and behavior. But now I'm living a life of freedom from sin and I'm enjoying life and I'm walking with God and I'm experiencing his blessing upon my life because sin is no longer there hindering what God wants to do. That's what's happening presently.

The future tense of our salvation is glorification. And glorification is deliverance from the presence of sin. Deliverance from the presence of sin.

And that's where we're headed. One day we'll be delivered from the presence of sin. You see, we still have sin to deal with.

It's around us. It's still unfortunately in us. But one day because I've been justified, one day I will also be glorified.

And one day the very presence of sin will be gone and we'll be without sin. Like Jesus. When we see him, we will be like him for we shall see him as he is.

Now, when God looks at you who have put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, God sees you as righteous. He sees you as perfect. And this we would refer to as our position as believers.

You see, Paul even said in writing to the Ephesians, he said that we are presently seated in heavenly places in Christ. That's how certain our salvation is. We're presently seated in heavenly places in Christ.

I'm standing here on the earth, but I'm actually seated in heavenly places in Christ because I'm in Christ. I'm right there in the heavens before the throne of God. You see, God sees you tonight.

He sees me. He sees us in Christ. That's our position.

So guess what? When God looks at you, he doesn't see all the things that I see. He doesn't see all the things that your wife or your husband sees. He doesn't see all the things that everybody else sees.

He doesn't see all the things that you see when you look in the mirror because he sees you in Christ and he sees you perfect in Christ. That's our position tonight. And the instant you believe in Jesus, that's your position.

Now think about it. You're in Christ. Christ is perfect.

How can you enhance that? What can you do add to that? What contribution can you make to improve that? None. There's nothing. There's nothing you can do whatsoever.

It's all done. So that's our position. But then we have another aspect to consider and that's the one that we mentioned.

It's the practical side of things. Positionally, I'm seated in the heavenlies in Christ. Practically, I'm standing here behind this podium and I will leave here tonight and go home.

And I might be impatient with my kids and I might yell at them and say things that I shouldn't say. And I might be insensitive to my wife who's been gone all weekend. And I might say something like, man, I sure wish you'd quit booking these things for the weekend, leaving me stranded all alone.

And I might hurt her feelings. And you know what I'm talking about? We all do things that they're not always the right thing. We say things that aren't the right thing.

We think things that aren't the right thing. Now, here's the question. When I do that, what happens to my salvation? Do I lose it? Is it gone until I get that sorted out and then I get it back? No, it's not.

Do I somehow lose my position in heaven? I'm not going to be mean to my wife tonight, but let's just say hypothetically, I was going to be. Would I fall from heaven? My heavenly being seated in the heavenlies. Would I fall from that? No, I wouldn't because that's my position.

But here I am on earth, practically speaking, and I'm still stumbling along at times. I'm still thinking the wrong things. Sometimes I'm still saying the wrong things.

I'm still doing the wrong things, but you know what? I'm not encouraging us to do that sort of thing, but I want you to know that when you do that, it doesn't change your position. You're still God's child. You're still accepted in the beloved.

You're still in Christ. You're still perfect. Now, you see, this is something that a lot of times as Christians, we don't even understand it, let alone the world.

The world doesn't have a clue. And that's why people in the world are sometimes confused because they look at somebody who's a Christian and they think, hey, I know a better. I know a guy who's an atheist and he's a better Christian than you are because what he's looking at is he's looking at your behavior.

Now, if people are doing that to you, that's not good. And God does want to deal with our behavior. I'm not advocating bad behavior here tonight, but I'm just letting you know that practically speaking, we are in a process of sanctification and your sanctification does not affect your justification.

You see, when you're doing great, your position isn't any better in heaven than when you're not doing that great because your position cannot be altered. Now, when you're not doing that great here on earth, you are hindering what God wants to do. You're stumbling people.

Perhaps you're bringing a lot of confusion into people's minds because you say you're a Christian. They know you're a Christian, but you're not behaving like a Christian. This is a problem.

And it is a problem that has to be dealt with. It's a problem that God deals with through his word. It's a problem he deals with by convicting us with his spirit.

It's a problem that sometimes he has to deal with by chastising us if we don't respond to the other means of correction. You see, God's initial means of correction is to is to convict us and to prick our hearts and to get us to turn away from those things. And if we do that, great.

But if we persist and go in the wrong direction, then God will chastise us. He'll he'll bring out the rod and discipline us because whom the Lord loves, he chastens and he corrects every child that he receives. You see, because you're God's child, he will discipline you because he doesn't want you.

Casting dirt on the family name. He won't let you get away with that kind of stuff. So we're in this position, having been justified, being in Christ, seated in the heavenlies as perfect as we'll ever get from that point of view.

But we're on earth still. And this is where God is working out that salvation. Remember, Paul said in writing to the Philippians, he said, work out your own salvation.

Some people misread that and they say, oh, look, you see, works have a place in salvation. Paul says right here, he says, work out your own salvation. Yes, he does say that.

But notice what he doesn't say. He doesn't say work for your own salvation. He says, work out your own salvation.

The implication is you've already got it. And to work out your salvation means to bring out into your life experience all of the reality of the salvation that's in you. That's what it's about.

Bringing out the salvation that God has put in us. That's what sanctification is. It's bringing the salvation out.

It's working it out. It's letting it thoroughly permeate our lives and flow from our lives. And so people look at us and say, wow, that person's saved.

But, you know, we really do better with sanctification if we understand justification. We really do. Because if I understand that God loves me and that he's got me, that I'm secure in his hand, then it's from that basis of security that I just, all right, Lord, here we go.

You just do it. Do what you want to do in my life. I'm yours.

You've got me. I'm seated in the heavenlies. I'm in your hand.

No one can snatch me from your hand. Lord, just take my life now. And I want to go for it all the way with you.

But you see, the person who doesn't have that security, they're always living in this. Oh, I don't know if I'm going to be saved. Oh, you know, I blew it again this weekend.

I might as well just give up. You know, I can't make it anyway. And they drift off for a while and then they're out there and they're miserable and they come back and they say, oh, I don't know, you know, I just and we we see that a lot today.

But know this. We've been justified. And as we just believe God and just receive that salvation, then God works that in us and he works it through us and we cooperate with him and we submit to him.

And it's a good thing. It's the right thing. It's not a burdensome thing, as we studied when we were going through First John.

This is the love of God that we keep as commandments. Commandments are not burdensome. I don't get up in the morning and think, oh, man, I got to obey God today.

So many other things I wanted to do today away. I am so glad that I have the power of Christ in me that I can obey God today and I don't have to live in sin that wrecks my life and the life of everybody else around me. Thank God for that.

So Paul says we are right there with Abraham. This is what Abraham did. And so those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Abraham was a blessed man. And everybody who is saved by grace through faith is a blessed person, too. And you know what? That's where you see the difference in people.

You meet somebody that thinks they've got to work their way to God. You know what? They're not blessed and they're not a blessing and they're not anybody that you want to spend a whole lot of time with. It's there's a miserable element to that.

But somebody who's just saved and. Believing just like Abraham did. It's so wonderful.

It's great. You know, one of the things that. I think over the years for many, many years here in this community.

Has been so attractive about the ministry here to people. And so attractive just about Pastor Chuck himself is just. You know, when you meet Chuck, you would never guess that he's a pastor.

You know, in the stereotypical sense that people would often think he's not uptight. He's not looking you up and down to see if you've sinned today. You know, he's just smiling and relaxed and.

And that has gone. So far. To give.

A different perspective, the right perspective, the biblical perspective to people. On who God really is. And that's the way it always was supposed to be, man.

You know, just like Jesus himself and Paul was like that, too. Jesus and Paul were people that you would have just loved to be around the Pharisees. No way.

Keep those guys away from me, man. They're just uptight. They're petty.

They're always looking for some thing that you're doing wrong and always making sure that, you know, that they're righteous and you're not. And sadly, throughout the long history of the church, there have been so many that have followed suit with the Pharisees and unfortunately, so few that have been more like Jesus and Paul. People that you could be around and and feel that there's acceptance, there's love, there's mercy, there's grace.

That's how it was. And that's what Paul is baffled by. He just can't figure out how is it that you guys have gone from that environment to this? How is it that you've gone from this free, rejoicing, just, you know, just a cool kickback relationship with God into this rigid, tense, uptight? Who in the world would want to make that kind of a trade? But so many have.

But he goes on and he says, because, you know, they're really they're really embracing this law thing. They're they're thinking, well, this is this is really cool. We know now the real truth from these guys.

Paul, he didn't really know what he's talking about. We're going under the law, Paul says, for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse. For it is written, cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them for as many as are of the works of the law are under a curse.

Paul says you want to know the truth about the law. Let me tell you. I'll tell you about the law.

Those who are under the law are under a curse because cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things written in the book of the law to do them. You want to do you want to be under the law? Well, let me tell you what you've got to look forward to a curse. Because there's only a blessing in the law if you keep it in its entirety in thought, word and deed perpetually.

That's the only way to have a blessing under the law. One violation of the law, you're under a curse. So Paul's showing them you don't want to go under the law.

I've been there. I've done that. That's not the way to go.

Now, this is true. And we'll look at it in depth more, you know, from the theological standpoint that Paul presents it at here in our next study. But this is true.

Practically, those who are under the law are under a curse, practically speaking. And that's what I was talking about a minute ago. Whenever you start imposing all kinds of rules and regulations and all of these different standards by which you can hopefully be accepted by God, you immediately come under a curse.

You're under a curse. And the curse is twofold. It's either you realize your utter inability and the fact that you're constantly failing.

And so you live in misery and depression because you can't live up to the standard or and that's a curse to yourself or you become a curse to everybody else by being lifted up with pride, thinking that you keep the law and you're the most righteous person on the planet. And you're so obnoxious and arrogant and rude. Nobody can stand to be around you.

You're a curse to them. The law brings a curse any way you look at it. But here's a way to determine tonight whether or not you're under the law, not literally.

But, you know, you can have been justified by faith truly, but not understand the full implication of it. And therefore, practically speaking, you're living under the law. And here's the way to sort of get a perspective on where you're at tonight.

How do you feel most of the time in your relationship with God? Are you miserable? Do you feel like you're just a failure? You feel like you can never live up to God's standard for you. You feel like God is really probably just at the end of his rope with you. He's probably, you know, maybe one more time and you're out.

If you feel like that, it's because you're trying to relate to God in the wrong way. You haven't understood that you've been justified and that God doesn't want you living under a bunch of rules and regulations, rules and regulations that have been imposed by someone else. Or so often the reality is they're self-imposed.

We put them on ourself. We put these standards on ourself. And this is how we determine our worth, whether or not God really loves us today is based upon whether I performed according to the standard that I've set.

You know, sometimes we don't even do it consciously. It's almost like a subconscious thing. But you just go along living in that growing up myself in Roman Catholicism.

You know, if you take Roman Catholicism seriously, man, you are you're beaten down. You're living in dread and fear because, you know, you're failing and growing up in that and having a period before I was, you know, really. Born again, having a period where I really tried to live according to that, it took me years to get over some of that self-imposed law, you know, things that I just sort of was putting on myself as a trip.

And I had to one time sit back and sort of analyze the situation, and I discovered that in my mind. I had somehow concluded that anything that was enjoyable must be against the will of God. How did I ever come up with that? That's just that it's that self-imposed legalism.

And I live like that for a long time, just anything that was fun, anything that was pleasurable, anything that, you know, I might enjoy doing. I did it in fear and dread most of the time and feeling like, man, I'm really letting God down right now. And I finally came to a point of thinking, man, this is neurotic.

This can't be from God. Where did I get this stuff? This is what religion will do for you. It'll put you in a straitjacket and it'll make your life miserable because religion is about law.

It's about rules. It's legal. A relationship is about grace and about love and freedom.

You have a relationship with God through Jesus Christ, and God wants you to enjoy life. And you know that I'm not talking about enjoying life in a sinful sense because that's not enjoying life. Sin is not enjoyable.

It is briefly, but it's not long before the reality of it is manifest. But God wants us to enjoy life in the spirit. God wants us to be free from these rules and these regulations and these things that bring us under a curse and make us miserable.

How do we do that? We just accept the fact that God saved us because we believed in Jesus. And we rejoice in that and we thank him for that. And we just live in that, the liberty.

And later on in this epistle, Paul will say that. He'll say them, stand fast in the liberty with which Christ has made you free and do not be entangled again in a yoke of bondage. See, God set us free.

And the best advertisement for the kingdom of God is a person who's free in the spirit, a person who's just enjoying their salvation. That's what God wants you to do. That's what he wants me to do.

Blessed with believing Abraham. Go back and read the life of Abraham. Just study his life.

Look at what he did. Just traveled around, had his tent, hanging out, planting a tree for the Lord, putting up an altar here and there, just worshiping God. The Lord and some angels come through.

They have sit down and have lunch together. It's just a great thing. God appears to him every now and again and tells him, I'm going to do this for you.

I'm going to do that for you. And there's no record of Abraham saying, okay, now what's my part? What do I do now? God's just saying, I'm going to do all of this for you. And Abraham's just believing it and the blessings coming.

And the last thing is we close when God makes his covenant with Abraham, he tells Abraham, he says, okay, this is what I want you to do. I want you to take these various sacrificial animals, and I want you to slay them. And I want you to fillet them.

And I want you to, to set them in order. This is how a covenant was made. The animals would be laid out and then two parties in agreement as the covenant would be made between the two of them.

They would join hands and walk through that together in a ceremony, intending that they were now binding themselves together in the covenant. So God has Abraham do that party has him make all of the arrangements. And then he causes a deep sleep to come up on him.

And then the Lord himself alone passes through in this ceremony. And the point is this God makes the covenant with himself and says, I'm going to do this because I'm going to do it. And that's what we have.

You see, we have a relationship with God. That's not based upon me. It's based upon him.

God's going to bless our lives because of who he is. And all we do is believe it like Abraham did. And when it comes to justification, this is the reality.

Faith and works are mutually exclusive. They cancel one another out in the area of justification. It's one or the other.

It's not both. It can't be both. And so that's the reality of salvation.

God's done it all. Just like God walked through those slain animals and made that covenant with Abraham. God, the son went to that cross on his own.

He hung there and he died himself. He did all the work and we just believe what he did and we receive the benefits of it. That's the gospel.

That's the good news. Let's thank God for it. Lord, we do thank you.

And Lord, it's just such a wonderful thing what you have done. It's so wonderful that our minds, Lord, have a hard time grasping it. And we tend to gravitate back toward works, back toward legalism.

Lord, free us from that. Free us from that. And may we, like Abraham, know that blessing of just simply believing, trusting you.

And Lord, I pray for those that have been under a curse in the practical sense because they've been trying to live up to some standard that someone's imposed or they've imposed upon themselves. Lord, may they tonight just find rest in the finished work of Jesus and in your declaration of their righteousness. May they know tonight that they're seated in the heavenly places in Christ.

And Lord, if there are any among us that haven't yet received your gift of salvation, may they open their hearts tonight and receive the gift of eternal life by receiving your son. Help them to do that. We pray in Jesus name.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/11/SID11487.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/brian-brodersen/galatians-blessed-like-abraham/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net