



# Digging Deeper

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## Those Foolish, Irrational, Unthinking, Crazy Galatians

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Oh, foolish Galatians! Who has cast an evil spell on you? For the meaning of Jesus Christ's death was made as clear to you as if you had seen a picture of his death on the cross. Let me ask you this one question: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law of Moses? Of course not! You received the Spirit because you believed the message you heard about Christ. How foolish can you be? After starting your new lives in the Spirit, why are you now trying to become perfect by your own human effort? Have you experienced so much for nothing? Surely it was not in vain, was it? I ask you again, does God give you the Holy Spirit and work miracles among you because you obey the law? Of course not! It is because you believe the message you heard about Christ. In the same way, "Abraham believed God, and God counted him as righteous because of his faith." The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God. What's more, the Scriptures looked forward to this time when God would make the Gentiles right in his sight because of their faith. God proclaimed this good news to Abraham long ago when he said, "All nations will be blessed through you." So all who put their faith in Christ share the same blessing Abraham received because of his faith. Galatians 3:1-9 (New Living Translation, NLT)

Yes, I've included a lengthy passage here, but it is important to read it all and meditate on it what it is saying. We can get so caught up in our daily lives that we miss out on the grace of God. We live in a very performance-driven world. Without thinking about it, we can get sucked into the mindset that says we have to do certain things to be accepted- by man and by God.

The Apostle Paul uses a very strong word in this passage to describe the Christians at Galatia. Many Bibles translate it as foolish. The Greek word is anoetos, meaning unintelligent, unwise, and sensual (sense-dominated). It is the opposite of noieo, which means to exercise the mind, to comprehend, consider, perceive, think, or understand. In other words, Paul was saying, "You don't get it. You are not thinking! What kind of craziness have you been listening to? Use your brain and consider the truth that you were already told." These people had been born-again under Paul's ministry and they had been clearly shown through Paul's preaching and teaching how salvation comes through faith in the finished works of Jesus Christ. However, they had been listening to teachers who were filling their minds with the notion that, in addition to belief in Jesus, other works were needed to be saved. That is why Paul called them foolish. Some translations render it as irrational, stupid, senseless, witless,



thoughtless, and even crazy. In other words, they weren't thinking it through.

Paul was not trying to insult them, but he was trying to shake them with his words to bring them back to their senses. He explained that they didn't receive the Spirit of God by obedience to the Law of Moses, but by faith. He reminded them that Abraham came before the law of Moses and was made righteous by faith. In the same way, we are made righteous by faith, not by perfect performance.

If you think you have to be a perfect Christian, think again. It is not possible to be perfect in your own efforts. Instead, relax and rely on what Jesus already did for you. Are you permitted to act anyway you want? No, we are to be growing in the Word and in faith to become more and more like Jesus everyday. But, how we live is not governed by the Law of Moses, but by the Law of Love. We live this life by faith in the Son of God. Salvation is by faith, not what we do. But, as we grow in God, what we do and how we act will change to be a greater and greater reflection of the Lord. Faith is what pleases God, not our human efforts.