

# **HIS SIDE VERSUS OUR SIDE - OVERVIEW OF GALATIANS**

Or, What is a TRUE Christian?

by Norman Harrison

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## **CHAPTER 6**

### **FAITH VERSUS WORKS - GALATIANS 3:2-3**

"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 3:2,3.

Here is another striking, strongly contrasted antithesis; Law demands works; grace requires faith.

As law leaves us helplessly on Our Side, impotent to transfer us to His Side, it is evident that all works required by the law are equally impotent. As grace alone has positioned us on His Side, so faith lays hold of all the riches that are ours by His saving and sustaining grace.

#### **The Impotence of Works**

Man naturally wants to DO something. If there is anything he can do, that appeals to him as it fits well into his scheme of life. But --

1 -- Works of the law are "dead works" . (Hebrews 6:1; 9:14). The man that does them is by nature dead; hence his works are dead. They may satisfy his conscience, but they are powerless to give acceptance with GOD.

2 -- Works of the law leave the worker "under the curse" (Galatians 3:10). When we consider the real nature of the law, as we did in the study "Blessing versus Cursing" we realize that all we may do under it is powerless to lift its curse. All our works are wasted effort, all to no purpose.

3 -- Works of the law fail to give favor with GOD. This is the repeated declaration of scripture: "For by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified" (Galatians 2:16, see Romans 3:20; 4:2-5; Galatians 3:11). GOD's method of making men good is through the goodness of Another; not by man's doing anything, but rather by his believing what GOD Himself has done.

#### **The Efficacy of Faith**

Faith, on the other hand, does everything that works fail to do. Rather, it enables GOD to do what man is impotent to do.

1 -- *Faith brings us over into the favor of GOD.* Among many, many scriptures this one is especially precious: "**Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ**" (Romans 5:1). Repeatedly men are exhorted to believe (the Greek verbal form of faith) unto salvation: "**Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved**" (Acts 16:31). GOD has no other way for man to get over onto His Side; and man through persistent effort has failed to find any.

2 -- *Faith lays hold of GOD.* Faith is man's impotence taking hold of GOD's omnipotence. Just as the trolley arm claims the resources of the powerhouse, so faith releases the resources of GOD.

3 -- *Faith claims the very life of GOD:* "That believing ye might have life" (John 20:31). "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (John 3:36).

4 -- *Faith possesses the Spirit of GOD* (Galatians 3:2).

5 -- *Faith claims the indwelling CHRIST* (Ephesians 3:17).

6 -- *Faith moves GOD to the utterly impossible with man* (Matthew 17:20).

7 -- *Faith alone makes it possible to please GOD* (Hebrews 11:6).

8 -- *Faith lays hold of GOD's faithfulness.*

9 -- *Faith motivates the life, issuing in "good works."* "**Faith without works is dead**" (James 2:20, 26). Works evidence the reality of faith. In the recital of Hebrews 11 great exploits are attributed to faith. Says the narrator:

**"And what shall I more say? for the time would fail me to tell of Gedeon, and of Barak, and of Samson, and of Jephthae; of David also, and Samuel, and of the prophets: Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, Quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens."** -- Hebrews 11:32-34.

Faith laid hold of GOD, and had these wonderful accomplishments to its credit. But it did more. Faith emboldened these Old Testament notables to undertake these exploits. Faith worked. Faith did what works could never dare to undertake, and daring, would have failed. Faith works, because GOD works through faith.

Thus we are saved, not by good works but unto good works. Grace enables, faith empowers, and the works follow.

"I would not work my soul to save,  
For this my Lord has done;

But I would work like any slave  
For love of GOD's dear Son."

~ end of chapter 6 ~

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