

## Paul's Letter to the Galatians Bewitched Believers

Galatians 3:1-5

1. **An Accusation: Are You So Foolish?** (vs.1, 3)

The severity of Paul's concern manifests itself in his exasperation over the behavior of the Galatian Christians. Their foolishness was not a product of insufficient mental faculties, but rather indolence. They neglected to make use of what had been revealed to them (cf. Lk. 24:25). When converted, a Christian has a new capacity for wisdom (cf. Pr. 1:7; 1 Co. 1:18), and applying this wisdom allows one to avoid the folly of worldliness (cf. Ti. 3:3). Paul is chastising them for being derelict in the wise application of the truth that had been revealed to them.

2. **An Observation: Who Has Bewitched You?** (v.1)

Paul is not asking for the name of the false teachers who came to their churches, he is asking a rhetorical question penetrating to the depth of their confusion (cf. Gn. 3:1-5). Something had caused them to forsake the truths that Paul had demonstrably taught them for ideas which were contradictory (cf. Jude 3-4).

3. **An Inquisition: How Have You Experienced Christ?** (vs.2-5)

Paul's argument now shifts from a recitation of his own history in the proclamation of the gospel (Gal. 1:11-2:21) to now asking the Galatian Christians to examine their own experience in receiving the gospel (Gal. 3:1-5) before he begins his biblical defense of the gospel (Gal. 3:6ff).

A. How did you receive the Spirit? (v.2)

In asking this question, Paul not only calls to mind their beginning in the Christian faith, but the language also stresses God's grace in justification.

B. What has changed since then? (v.3)

He is asking the question as if their justification were merely *begun* by the Spirit but had to now be finished by obedience to the Law. The Christian, by faith in Christ, is fully justified before God when he or she is born again.

C. How has the Father been working among you? (v.5)

Paul extends his guided introspection beyond the beginning of their faith and into their continuing experience of God's miraculous works.