

The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians

Sons of Abraham

Galatians 3:6-9

1. The Example of Abraham (v.6)

Paul now directly relates the experience of the gentile believers in the Galatian churches to the biblical testimony of Abraham's own justification. Gen. 15:6 is the primary verse that Paul uses to ground the doctrine of justification by faith in the Scriptures (cf. Ro. 4:3, 22). Abraham's justification came well before the sign of circumcision (Gen. 17:23-27) and centuries before the giving of the Law (Ex. 20).

2. The Pattern of Abraham (v.7)

A legitimate connection Abraham is key important for anyone who is going to worship the God of the Bible (cf. Mt. 3:7-9; Jn. 8:33, 39, 41-45). During the 400 silent years, the traditional understanding of the Old Testament as held by the Pharisees, that of justification by works of the Law, gained prominence in Jewish life. Paul argues that the only way one can truly follow after Abraham is by faith in God, and not by works of the Law (cf. Rom. 4:1ff).

3. The Preaching to Abraham (v.8)

Paul continues his case not only by emphasizing that Abraham was not justified by keeping the Law, but that before he bore the marks of the covenant God had promised to bless all of the families of the earth (Gen. 12:3; cf. Lk. 2:25-35).

4. The Blessed with Abraham (v.9)

Paul reaffirms the historical and biblical foundation of the doctrine of justification by faith in contradiction to the false teaching of the Judaizers. Those who attack this doctrine and promote a works-based righteousness for justification may attempt to appeal to the Scriptures to justify this claim, but their claims do not hold up to the test of Scripture (cf. James 2:14-26, esp. v.24).