

## The Benefits of Faith (Part 1) – Gal 3:7-14

Gal 3:7-14; We're working our way through the book of Galatians, finding and being reminded of all *kinds* of truths; Including, the benefits of our *faith*  
Last week was the *centrality* of faith, and this week is the benefits  
And who doesn't want benefits? Especially when we're surprised by them; Which I think you'll be today

And let me just say that this might be a bit overwhelming at first; There's a lot of information, a lot of dots to connect, and it's going to come fast  
But don't let that deter you from sticking with it, and soaking it up  
And downloading the notes from our website to go back over it

➤ That said, we're not going to cover the whole passage; In fact, we're going to focus *primarily* on v7; B/c there's so much there; So many implications;  
So follow along with me as I read v7-9, and let's see if we can't get the context

The Apostle Paul is writing, and having just emphasized the *importance* of our faith in v1-6, he says in v7 . . .

[7] *Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham. [8] And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."* [9] *So then, those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.*

In earlier chapters he covered the *foundations* of our faith, then the *importance* of our faith, and now the *implications* of it; The benefits; The first of which, is that . . .

### We are part of God's chosen people (v7)

True; That's what Paul means when he says *sons of Abraham* in v7

*Know then* [as in this is important; I want you to get this] *that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham*. As in God's chosen people; That's what it means

➤ But before we get to that, and we will, look at the *1<sup>st</sup>* part of the verse; The prerequisite  
[7] *It is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.*  
Referring to those who believe and trust in *Jesus* to save them and keep them

And I say Jesus, b/c that's who Paul *started* his thought with in v1, and ends it with in v14  
*It was before your eyes [3:1] that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified . . . So that [v14] in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles*  
It's Jesus first, Jesus last, and Jesus always; And those who believe and trust in him to save them and keep them, are part of God's people

➤ And *only* those who trust in Jesus; *Only* those of faith in him are sons of Abraham  
That's the sense of this verse in the original language of Greek; It's emphatic  
So that a literal rendering might read – "The ones of faith, *these* are the sons of Abraham;" Implying, that . . .

### • Those without faith are excluded

If you're not of *faith*, faith in Jesus, you're not a part of God's chosen people; No matter what your religion or ethnicity; Including *physical* sons of Abraham; Jewish people  
If they don't believe in *Jesus*, God doesn't consider them his people

It's yet another bombshell that Paul dropped on them, and may even be so for you  
Thinking that Jews are part of God's chosen people no matter what  
They're not; *No one who denies the Son has the Father* the Bible says (1 Jn 2:23)  
Only those who *believe* in his name have the right to be called children of God (Jn 1:12)

Which means Jews need Jesus just like you and I do; And they need to put their *faith* in him just like you and I do  
B/c *it is those of faith* [and only those of faith] *who are the sons of Abraham*.  
Those without it, are excluded

➤ And that ought to make your heart ache  
With *great sorrow and unceasing anguish*; Like Paul said in Rom 9  
B/c the Jews of old, the Old Testament Israelites, occupied such a privileged position – and for the *most* part, squandered it; Failing to believe  
[4] *They are Israelites* [Paul said], *and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. [5] To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ*  
But most of them *failed* to believe, and lost out; And still do

Which ought to *break our heart*; And increase our compassion, our prayer, and our sense of urgency to reach them with the gospel; And urge them to believe  
So that they *too* would be *sons of Abraham*

➤ And at the same time, knowing you're *included*, ought to *fill* your heart; Knowing that you're grafted *in*; By faith  
A part of Abraham's family tree for *good* (Rom 11:17-24); A *true* son or daughter  
Just like *Jews* of faith are true sons and daughters

What a blessing; What a benefit; That we're part of God's chosen people by *faith*, and only by faith (**Summary**)

➤ But it begs the question – Why *Abraham*? What does he have to do with it? And why did Paul use *him* as an example? Like in v6, where he *cites* Abraham's faith  
Saying he *believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness*  
And now, in v7, he's talking about his *lineage* of all things; Why him and why that?

B/c when you get right down to it . . .

### • Abraham's the man

It's all I could do to keep from saying it when I read v9 – *those who are of faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man*; The man *of faith*.

Start to finish Paul appeals to him, b/c he's one of the most important figures of our faith; *The* man, through whom God raised up a new people group, as his own  
So that *from* him Heb 11 says, *were born descendants* [physically and spiritually] *as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore* (v12); *From him*

Which makes him the man, and the first of 3 reasons Paul appeals to him; B/c . . .

➤ A. Abraham was the father, or patriarch, of the Jews; The Israelites  
He's the one *with* whom every Jew was connected by birth, and therefore the one *to* whom *they* appealed, in order to claim their inheritance and ensure their future

Something they even did in the presence of Jesus; Essentially saying, “We don’t need you *or* your message. We’ve got Abraham.” (Jn 8:31-47) He was their man

B. Abraham was the one through whom God promised to bless the world  
Referring to the Abrahamic Covenant in Gen 12 (**Gen 12:2-3**); Where God told him . . .  
[2] *I will make of you a great nation* [think people group; with similar convictions, goals, and practices], *and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing* [we’re blessed to *be* a blessing]. [3] *I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse* [punish], *and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*  
2100 BC; And God was already lining things up for our benefit; Our blessing\*\*\*\*\*

C. Abraham was the poster child of the Judaizers  
Jews from Jerusalem of the *Circumcision Party*, who said that Gentile believers had to be circumcised to be *part* of covenant; And *righteous* before God  
And cited Abraham as *their* example; B/c he was circumcised himself – Gen 17 (v24)  
If it’s required of him they said, it’s required of us; He was their poster child

And all the more so, b/c many of the *Intertestamental* Jews, said that it wasn’t due to his *belief*, his *faith*, that God counted him righteous . . .  
But his obedience and *perseverance*; What he *did*; His works; That was *their* thinking  
Written and preserved in some of the *apocryphal* books of the time  
Not scripture, but *extra-biblical* writings, that were still *influential* in Paul’s day

➤ So it’s no surprise that Paul used *Abraham* to make his point, b/c he was one of the most important figures in our faith *and* theirs  
And goes right to the core of things, in v6, by citing Abraham’s *faith* as the reason God counted him righteous; Not his works or obedience, but his *belief*  
Something God said and did in Gen 15; *Before* he was circumcised

That’s “Why Abraham?” B/c he’s the man with whom the benefits started, and our *example* of faith, that enables us to receive them

All of which brings us full circle then, to where *we* started; That . . .

• **The sons of Abraham and God’s chosen people are one and the same**  
That’s what Paul’s saying in v7, in both a *biblical* way, and a culturally *relevant* way for those times; That those of faith are part of God’s chosen people . . .  
B/c the sons of Abraham *are* God’s people

It’s a connection made *throughout* the Old Testament; In *multiple* places  
Like Isaiah 41 (**41:8-9**); Where God is *speaking* to his people, and says  
[8] *You, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen, the offspring of Abraham, my friend . . . “You [all of you, one and the same] are my servant, I have chosen you and not cast you off”*  
In one sentence, God refers to *Israel, Jacob*, another name for Israel he sometimes used, the *offspring of Abraham*, and his chosen people as one and the same  
They’re synonymous; That verse nails it

➤ So when Paul says that those of faith are sons of *Abraham*, he means that we are part of Israel; *Spiritual* Israel; True Israel\*\*\*\*\*

Or as Paul says in chapter 6 of Galatians (16) – the *Israel of God*  
That’s how he refers to us; The church; As the *Israel of God*

Not to be confused with the *nation* of Israel in our day, or *ethnic* Israel in *any* day  
We are part of *true* Israel; Those who are his; Those he’s chosen; Those he elected before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:3-6)  
From both the Jews *and* Gentiles; Gentiles *and* Jews  
All by way of faith; *It is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham*

Which means, we couldn’t be any *more* in as God’s people; We are full-fledged part of God’s chosen people  
Something for which we ought to praise the Lord; Every single day, in every single way

➤ It’s like that little kids song – *Father Abraham*; Ever heard it? It goes like this . . .  
*Father Abraham, had many sons; Many sons had Father Abraham*  
*I am one of them, and so are you; So let’s all praise the Lord; Right arm; Left arm*  
Ever heard *that*? What a great summary and response to this truth – let’s all praise the Lord

I probably sang that song 100 times with our girls, and though I don’t remember giving them an explanation, it sure does beg for one  
And this is it; That those who trust in God like Abraham did, are part of his spiritual lineage known as the *people* of God; His chosen ones; His offspring  
I’m one of them; How about you?

We’re a part of God’s chosen people, and here’s the next part . . .

• **It’s all according to plan**

Far from an afterthought, we’re a part of God’s people according to God’s *design*; God’s forethought; God’s prophecy; God’s promise

Like Paul says in **Rom 9:6-8**

[6b] *For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel, [7] and not all are children of Abraham* [sons of Abraham] *because they are his offspring*  
IOW membership in God’s chosen people is not hereditary; It’s not a result of lineage or ancestry, just like it’s not a result of works  
Something *most* of the Israelites got wrong; On both fronts; And therefore failed to *attain* the righteousness of God Paul says  
Why? Why? *B/c they did not pursue it by faith*; Rom 9:32  
Indicating that faith was *always* the plan; Then *and* now

*Not all (v8) are children of Abraham because they are his offspring, but “Through Isaac shall your offspring be named.”* [Abraham’s son]  
[8] *This means that it is not the children of the flesh who are the children of God, but the children of the promise are counted as offspring.*  
Referring, to God’s sovereign *plan*, to choose those who are his, and save them by faith  
Like he did with Isaac instead of Ishmael; Or Jacob instead of Esau

He *chose* them, they responded in *faith*, and were therefore added to Abraham’s offspring;  
Included in God’s chosen people  
The *same* thing God does with *us*; And has all along; According to plan\*\*\*\*\*

➤ 1 Pet 2:9-10; This is *another* Scripture that makes the point; Applying to *us* both the nomenclature and the promises, that God *first* applied to the Israelites

Peter just got through saying in v8, that those who don't believe – *stumble because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do*. IOW it's all according to plan [9] *But you [speaking to us, believers] are a chosen race [according to plan], a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. [10] Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy. We have; According to plan Using the same verbiage to refer to *us*, as God did to refer to his people of *old*; Before Christ*

Like in **Ex 19:5-6**, where speaking for God, Moses said . . .

*[5] Now therefore, if you will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my treasured possession [a people for his own possession as Peter says it] among all peoples, for all the earth is mine [I can do what I want, and have a plan]; [6] and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests [a royal priesthood in Peter words] and a holy nation.*

Sound familiar? What a connection; And what a plan; Using the *same* labels, and extending the same benefits to *us*, as he first promised to them\*\*\*\*\*

And don't forget v10, where Peter combines and quotes several verses from the prophet *Hosea*; Like **Hosea 1:10**; Where he just said that God had rejected . . .

The vast *majority* of the Israelites, b/c of their rebellion and disobedience [10] *Yet the number of the children of Israel shall be like the sand of the sea, which cannot be measured or numbered. And in the place where it was said to them, "You are not my people," it shall be said to them, "Children of the living God."*

You *are* my people; Chosen people; According to plan

Laid out 725 years before it finally took off with the advent of Christ, and confirmed a few decades later by the pen of Peter\*\*\*\*\*

➤ Put all that together, and you come to this . . .

That Peter and Paul apply the *promises* spoken through Moses, and the *prophecies* spoken through Hosea, to *us*; Those of *faith*

Just like it says in Gal 3:8 – *The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "In you shall all the nations be blessed."* It was all, according, to plan

➤ In fact . . .

• **What was originally intended for *ethnic* Israel, is now intended for spiritual Israel**

What was originally offered to them, is now offered to us; Those of faith

Something Jesus was quite clear about; Uncomfortably so at times

Like in **Mt 21:43**, when speaking to the Jews who had *rejected* him

*I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people producing its fruits.*

IOW you've had your chance; You've *had* your early bird opportunity; And now it's over; I'm opening the doors to others; People who believe; *Spiritual* Israel

Or how about **Mt 8:11-12**? Where speaking of Jews once again, he said

*[11] I tell you, many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven, [12] while the sons of the kingdom [ethnic Israelites who don't believe] will be thrown into the outer darkness.*

That's so clear and strong, it's uncomfortable

Reinforced by a full length *parable* he told later on; The parable of the tenants; Mk 12

Saying at the end of it – *What will the owner of the vineyard [the inheritance of my people] do? He will come and destroy the tenants and give the vineyard to others.*

For which the Jews wanted to stone him; B/c it was crystal clear

That what was originally intended for them, is now for everybody – those of faith from *every* tribe, tongue, and nation\*\*\*\*\*

➤ Does that mean God no longer has a special place in his *heart* for the Jews? No; He does; And a special plan; That's being played out even *now* according to Rom 11 Nor has he completely forgotten them and moved on; B/c *the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable* for those who are his (Rom 11:29)

But those who are his, are only those of *faith*; Those who believe and trust in *Jesus*, just like us (**Summary**)

So that together, we enjoy the benefit of being God's chosen people, and praise the Lord

Prayer – Father, we're a privileged lot; With benefits fit for a king; And say with the Psalmist – *Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and all that is within me*; We praise you, God; And for all your goodness we will *keep* on praising; *Keep* on singing Receive our tithes and offerings now, as an expression of that