

# BOOK OF GALATIANS

## “*Bewitched*”

Scripture Reading: GALATIANS 3:1-5

- ) **SLIDES 1-6.** Bible Jeopardy!
- ) **SLIDES 7-8.** Read today’s Scripture text.
- ) **SLIDE 9.** We took a break over the past few weeks to dedicate our sermon time to the season of Advent. We now return once again to our expository study of the Book of GALATIANS. This is message #17. I have titled today’s message “*Bewitched.*”
- ) This morning I will be taking each of the five verses in today’s reading and break them down as to what Paul is saying to these people at the churches in the area of Galatia.
- ) **SLIDE 10-11.** (v1) Paul rebukes their **BEHAVIOR.**
- ) Most of us remember the 60s TV series “*Bewitched*” starring Elizabeth Montgomery. In that show, she plays a nice witch married to a mere mortal Darren Stevens. Well, our word “*bewitched*” from our text today has nothing to do with witches, the occult, or wiggling our noses to create things out of nothing.
- ) **SLIDE 12.** In this verse the apostle Paul rebukes the people in the churches in Galatia for being bewitched. What exactly does he mean to be bewitched? Definition.
- ) This is important because this rebuke over being bewitched sets the stage for the next four verses.
- ) If we were to go back and review chapters one and two, we will see that Paul is extremely upset over the fact that someone or some people have come into these churches at Galatia and are proliferating a false gospel. Paul reminds them here in v1 that the true gospel is Christ crucified and that alone.

- ) He has already told them back in chapter one that a false gospel cannot and will not save anyone. And an anathema is pronounced by Paul on those who speak false gospels.
- ) What makes this matter even worse is that these undiscerning Galatians are falling for these false gospels. It's as if these false teachers are placing these people under some sort of magical spell. Thus, the word "*bewitched*." Great word to use.
- ) There are people out there who are very charismatic in their words and in their mannerisms and are even pleasing on the eyes that can easily bewitch a person into believing anything.
- ) And Paul tells us (1:10) that these false teachers are doing it to gain the favor of men. And it's working in Galatia. And it's working all too well. And Paul has to rebuke them for this.
- ) **SLIDE 13-14.** (v2) Paul refreshes their **MINDS**.
- ) Hey, Galatians, how did you get saved? Was it something you worked towards, or was it something you accepted by faith? It's a rhetorical question and they should know the answer.
- ) Paul had just been through this area of Galatia within the past five years. It goes to show how easy it is to be bewitched by charismatic false teachers who are seeking to gain your favor.
- ) **SLIDE 15-16.** Paul challenges their **MOTIVES**.
- ) So, what are the foolish motives of these bewitched Galatians? What does he mean when he says, "*perfected by the flesh?*"
- ) Back in chapter two, Paul relates a story in this letter to the Galatians of how Peter and some of the Jews from Jerusalem demanded circumcision for salvation to those at Antioch. Paul had to rebuke Peter for this heresy.
- ) Paul wanted the Galatians to hear that story. Why? Because this exact same false teaching has now spread into their churches in Galatia. And it again involves circumcision.

- ) Their foolish motives were now to believe that circumcision was a necessary piece of the salvation puzzle. Sure, they started believing by faith. At least they say they were.
- ) But they were bewitched into believing that certain works must contribute to that salvation. Paul makes it clear. You cannot contribute, in any way, to the work Christ has already done.
- ) Perhaps they thought they were more holy or more righteous if they perfected that faith through their works. The work is done.
- ) **SLIDE 17-18**. Paul disputes their **SUFFERING**.
- ) To dispute means to “*call into question or cast doubt upon.*” Paul is calling into question why these people in Galatia are suffering. And he believes their suffering is unnecessary.
- ) Why? Because the suffering (persecution) they are experiencing is coming from those jealous Jews who want to beat them into submission over adding works to their salvation. And Paul is saying that they don’t need to be suffering at the hands of these Jews.
- ) Have you ever suffered for something unnecessarily? Give example of Dorothy and the ruby red slippers.
- ) Now the Galatians are doing all this suffering because now they feel they must do this or do that to hold onto and perfect their faith. That is how these false teachers have bewitched these people. When in reality they have all that they need in the simple faith and trust in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.
- ) Yes, we will suffer for the name of Jesus. But it will never be because of our failure to do a sufficient amount of works to perfect our faith. The Galatians suffering was in vain.
- ) **SLIDE 19-20**. Paul questions their **BELIEFS**.
- ) **SLIDE 21**. To help us with this verse, we need to go back to the Book of ACTS to give us some insight. Review map.

- ) **SLIDE 22.** ACTS 14:1-3. To help us with this verse, we will go to the Book of ACTS to give us some insight. Read. The gospel message would be affirmed by the signs and wonders done by Paul. Explain.
- ) **SLIDE 23.** ACTS 14:8-10. Read. Again, the gospel message would be affirmed by the signs and wonders done by Paul.
- ) We see in these two examples from the Book of ACTS that miracles were performed in two of those cities in the area of Galatia—Iconium and Lystra.
- ) **SLIDE 24.** Now, let's look at v5 again. Galatians, how is the Spirit given and by what power are miracles performed? By the works of the Law, or by faith? Miracles are never performed by keeping the Law—only by faith. Why didn't you trust us? Why are you allowing yourselves to be bewitched by false teachers?
- ) **SLIDE 25.** This is similar to the question he asks back in verse 2. Hey, Galatians, how did you get saved? Was it something you worked towards, or was it something you accepted by faith? And if you accepted the free gift of salvation by faith, why are you now trying to perfect it with works? He questions their beliefs. Are you truly saved?
- ) **SLIDE 26.** Are you saved? Am I saved? This is a question we must always be asking ourselves. 2COR 13:5. Do we pass the test?
- ) So far throughout this study in GAL, I must sound like a broken record. There is nothing a person can do to contribute to their salvation or to perfect their salvation. Salvation (justification) is a once and done deal. Paul wanted to drum that truth home to these folks in Galatia. And I think it's important that preachers drum these same truths home to the people today.
- ) Bewitched. Just like there were false teachers then, we have false teachers today who bewitch their followers into believing everything they say.

- ) Salvation turns into a religious system, and you better not deviate from the system. Sure, you must believe in Jesus, but you must also do this and do that, or don't do this and don't do that. And that bewitching mentality is more mainstream than what you think. And it is dangerous.
- ) Next week we will look at verses 6 through 9 of chapter 3 and compare that and what we learned today with the teachings and theology of the 21<sup>st</sup> century Catholic Church. Do they add works to their salvation equation? And, as a former Catholic, I might even throw in a personal testimony.

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