

Christ redeemed us from that self-defeating, cursed life by absorbing it completely into himself. Do you remember the Scripture that says, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”? That is what happened when Jesus was nailed to the cross: He became a curse, and at the same time dissolved the curse. And now, because of that, the air is cleared.....

- 7 Can you think of things in your own life, things that you’ve done or things that have been done to you that feel like a curse (still having an effect on you)?

If so, can you give them over to Jesus and allow him to take them away from you?

Galatians 3:1-14 The Message (MSG)

Trust in Christ, Not the Law

3:1 You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a spell on you? Have you taken leave of your senses? Something crazy has happened, for it’s obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives. His sacrifice on the cross was certainly set before you clearly enough.

2-4 Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin? Was it by working your heads off to please God? Or was it by responding to God’s Message to you? Are you going to continue this craziness? For only crazy people would think they could complete by their own efforts what was begun by God. If you weren’t smart enough or strong enough to begin it, how do you suppose you could perfect it? Did you go through this whole painful learning process for nothing? It is not yet a total loss, but it certainly will be if you keep this up!

5-6 Answer this question: Does the God who lavishly provides you with his own presence, his Holy Spirit, working things in your lives you could never do for yourselves, does he do these things because of your strenuous moral striving *or* because you trust him to do them in you? Don’t these things happen among you just as they happened with Abraham? He believed God, and that act of belief was turned into a life that was right with God.

7-8 Is it not obvious to you that persons who put their trust in Christ (not persons who put their trust in the law!) are like Abraham: children of faith? It was all laid out beforehand in Scripture that God would set things right with non-Jews by *faith*. Scripture anticipated this in the promise to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed in you.”

9-10 So those now who live by faith are blessed along with Abraham, who lived by faith—this is no new doctrine! And that means that anyone who tries to live by his own effort, independent of God, is doomed to failure.



Scripture backs this up: “Utterly cursed is every person who fails to carry out every detail written in the Book of the law.”

¹¹⁻¹² The obvious impossibility of carrying out such a moral program should make it plain that no one can sustain a relationship with God that way. The person who lives in right relationship with God does it by embracing what God arranges for him. Doing things for God is the opposite of entering into what God does for you. Habakkuk had it right: “The person who believes God, is set right by God—and that’s the real life.” Rule-keeping does not naturally evolve into living by faith, but only perpetuates itself in more and more rule-keeping, a fact observed in Scripture: “The one who does these things [rule-keeping] continues to live by them.”

¹³⁻¹⁴ Christ redeemed us from that self-defeating, cursed life by absorbing it completely into himself. Do you remember the Scripture that says, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”? That is what happened when Jesus was nailed to the cross: He became a curse, and at the same time dissolved the curse. And now, because of that, the air is cleared and we can see that Abraham’s blessing is present and available for non-Jews, too. We are *all* able to receive God’s life, his Spirit, in and with us by believing—just the way Abraham received it.

Questions to consider:

It’s obvious that you no longer have the crucified Jesus in clear focus in your lives.....(verse 3)

1. In your day to day life, where is your main focus? On your own performance or on Christ’s?

Let me put this question to you: How did your new life begin? (verse2)

2. Have you begun a new life with God?

If no, do you want to?

If yes, are you still relying on God’s provision of free grace or have you shifted back to working your head off to please God?

Does the God who lavishly provides you with his own presence, his Holy Spirit, working things in your lives you could never do for yourselves, does he do these things because of your strenuous moral striving *or* because you trust him to do them in you? (verse 5 & 6)

3. What does ‘trusting the Holy Spirit to work’ look like in your life?
4. What is he doing in your life that you could never do for yourself?

Anyone who tries to live by his own effort, independent of God, is doomed to failure. (verse 9)

- 5 Do you agree or disagree with this statement – Why?

The person who lives in right relationship with God does it by embracing what God arranges for him. (verse 11)

- 6 Are you happy about embracing what God arranges for you or are you happier making your own arrangements?