

Mighty Presence

WARM-UP

- Who of your friends or relatives would you consider to be a perfectionist? Recall an instance explaining this.
- Think of one activity or hobby you started but never finished. What happened?
- Who do you spend most of your time with? Share two to three names. How do they rub off on you?

WORD

¹O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? It was before your eyes that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified. ²Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? ³Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? GALATIANS 3:1-3

The Apostle Paul was writing to the churches in Galatia to remind them of what Jesus had already accomplished for mankind on the cross and that our salvation is by faith from first to last. He was very disturbed about what he had heard, that the Galatian believers were adding works of the law to the finished work of Christ and trusting this legalistic fulfillment to bring them salvation. So, Paul asked them to recall how they first came to faith in Christ and what they had believed. Like the Galatians, we tend to add our good works to the finished work of Christ to feel secure in our salvation. In this lesson, we will look at two aspects of our life of faith in Christ that we need to be constantly reminded of.

1 We begin by the Spirit.

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? **GALATIANS 3:3**

As followers of Jesus Christ, we recognize that we are saved by grace through faith. It is His finished work on the cross that enabled our salvation. We begin our Christian life by the power of the Holy Spirit—He renews us, lives in us, teaches us, guides us, and empowers us (1 Corinthians 6:11). How did you begin your journey of faith by the power of the Holy Spirit? What were the challenges you faced when you came to know the Lord and how were you able to overcome them by the power of the Holy Spirit?

2 We will be perfected by the Spirit.

Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? **GALATIANS 3:3**

Paul was upset with the Galatian believers because although they knew the gospel, they were trying to go back to a life of legalism. He asked them if, after having begun in the Spirit, they were now trying to be perfected by the flesh. Paul was clear—we are not only saved by God, we are empowered to live the life He has called us to live, by His grace and through the power of the Holy Spirit (1 Peter 1:2). We grow in our faith because of His work, we become more and more like Christ because of His Spirit, and we will be perfected for His glory. Why do you think the Galatians tried to work out their salvation by following religious rules? Why is this dangerous and sinful?

APPLICATION

- Have you understood and put your faith in what Christ did for you on the cross? Who is the Holy Spirit to you, and how does He help you grow in faith every day?
- Recall how you came to know Christ. How has the Holy Spirit guided and taught you to be more like Christ every day? How can you guard against the temptation to work out your salvation by following religious rules?
- Pray for a friend or relative who may have begun in the Spirit but seems to be trying to work out perfection by the flesh. How do you think you can help him/her understand that our perfection one day will only be possible by the power of the Holy Spirit?

PRAYER

- Thank God for fulfilling His plan for our salvation and for now sanctifying us by the Holy Spirit every day.
- Pray that you will learn from the believers in Galatia, that you will not just begin by the Spirit but you will also be perfected by the same Spirit.
- Ask the Holy Spirit to empower you to boldly proclaim the gospel wherever you go.

NOTES
