

# Galatians 3:1-14

## Cause and Effect

**Scripture:** Galatians 3:1-14

**Memory Verse:** Galatians 3:3 "Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?"

**Lesson Focus:** Using simple cause and effect, we will see how the true gospel has no room for good works as the cause of our salvation. Instead, Paul will continue correcting the Galatians to rest in God's grace alone received through faith alone.

**Activities and Crafts:** Cause and Effect Comic and Bring It Home Discussion Qs for 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup>.  
Craft for 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Grade: Cause and Effect Chain

**Starter Activity:** Cause and Effect Challenge

Consider getting the lesson started with some fun that will demonstrate cause and effect. First briefly discuss what 'cause and effect' means. Explain that the cause describes WHY or HOW something happened and the effect describes WHAT happened. Write "cause" and "effect" in two columns on the whiteboard with these basic definitions next to them which we will reference throughout the lesson.

Next, invite several volunteers brave enough to experience different effects. You will be the cause agent! Put each effect on a slip of paper and have kids draw them. After they draw, add it to the whiteboard under the "effect" column and then introduce your secret cause. Try to have some good and some not so good to make it fun and exciting. \* Below are a few ideas, but feel free to bring your own:

### "SECRET" CAUSE

(have a piece of chocolate ready to give them)  
(have a piece of sour candy ready to give them)  
(gently spray kid with a water gun)  
(have the kid run in place for 30 seconds)  
(give the kid a piggy-back ride)  
(spray some silly string on the kid)  
(put a paper bag over their head)

### EFFECT

I taste something sweet  
I taste something sour  
I am wet  
I am tired  
I am moving  
I am sticky  
I can't see anything

Afterwards, transition into the lesson by adding one more effect: I AM SAVED. \*

Q: What is the cause of this? \* While the first two chapters of this book have answered this question, our text today will help us answer it even better. Let's go!

## Bible Study:

**Review Galatians 2:16** to see the answer to the above Q. It is NOT our good works, it is NOT our going to church, it is NOT us reading the Bible. \* The cause of our salvation is God's grace which we receive by faith in Jesus Christ alone!

(**Teachers:** Consider drawing a cross to represent God's grace as the corresponding **cause** and draw an arrow to the I AM SAVED **effect**). \* This is the gospel!

**Galatians 3:1:** The poor Galatians were confused. They had believed and received salvation, but then they were getting duped by these bad guys who came in saying faith in Jesus wasn't enough! As Paul said in **Galatian 2:21**, they were making Jesus's death **meaningless** by thinking their own good works were part of the cause!

**Galatians 3:2:** Not only were they saved when they believed, but they also received the Holy Spirit. But notice the question:

Q: What was the **cause** of them receiving the Holy Spirit? Good works or faith?

(**Teachers:** Consider adding the Holy Spirit as another effect under the "effect" column and add another arrow pointing to it from that cross used above)

**Galatians 3:3:** Twice now he has called them foolish. He really lets them have it! He might sound mean or harsh to you, but the fact is that he loves them too much to let them continue on this path that will ruin them! This is his loving wake-up call to return to the true gospel.

Somehow the bad guys fooled them into thinking that though they got saved by faith in the true gospel, now they must keep the law (be good) to "stay" saved. Paul says NO! We are not just saved by the gospel, but we also continue and grow by applying the same gospel to every area of life! See **Galatians 2:20**. \*

**Galatians 3:4-5:** Let's see if you are paying attention! Paul asks them once again and I also ask you:

Q: Are all of these wonderful "effects" (salvation, receiving the Spirit, miracles) caused by good works or faith? A: FAITH!

**Galatians 3:6:** Paul continues to make his point by pointing back to one of the heroes of the Bible!

Q: What was Abraham (not Abraham Lincoln!) famous for? \* A: He was a very old man that loved God. God promised that he would be the father of the Jewish nation. But he had no kids! His wife, Sarah, was old too (both over 90 years old).

Yet as Paul quotes in **Genesis 15:6**, Abraham believed, trusted, or had **faith** in God's promise and the result was Abraham's salvation!

Q: What does the Bible say the cause of Abraham's salvation was? A: It was the same grace of God received by faith! (**Teachers:** Consider adding "ABRAHAM IS SAVED" as another effect and draw an arrow to it from the same cross) \*

**Galatians 3:7:** Remember the bad guys were saying that these non-Jewish people needed to live like Jewish people now (keep the law) to stay saved. But Paul says that even Abraham (the father and hero of the Jewish people) would disagree! \*

**Galatians 3:8-9:** God not only promised that Abraham and Sarah would have a son that would become a mighty nation, but that the whole world would be blessed through him. This promise points to Jesus, the One who came from the line of Abraham and the Jewish nation to offer salvation to the whole world thru faith! The entire Old Testament \* describes ~2000 years of God working things out to fulfill that promise until Jesus was finally born on that first Christmas morning!

In all this discussion so far, Paul is contrasting faith with good works. The bad guys are telling the Galatians that good works must be inserted as a "cause" of our salvation, but Paul has been saying NO. (**Teachers:** Consider showing this by adding good works as a "cause" onto the board) Now we will see what the "actual effect" is of using good works or religious rule-keeping as a "cause" to be saved!

**Galatians 3:10:** This is the "effect" of injecting "good works" as a cause for our salvation. You will be cursed! (**Teachers:** Consider adding "cursed" as the real effect and draw an arrow from works as a cause to make this point) Why? Because you must keep it all **perfectly!** No one can do that!

**Galatians 3:11-12:** Faith and good works don't mix as the cause of our salvation. You must pick one or the other. One brings salvation and the other brings a curse!  
**Galatians 3:13-14:** But there was one Person who did keep the whole law perfectly!  
Q: Who is that? A: Jesus! And by His death He took the curse that belonged to us because of our law-breaking! And in taking our curse, He also offers us His righteousness, His forgiveness, His blessing to us not by good works but by faith! \*

**Key Point:** Some of you may be wondering...do my works matter at all? The answer is an absolute YES, but probably not in the way you think. Later in this book we will see that good works are not the **cause** of our salvation, but an **effect!** (**Teachers:** Consider showing this by adding another arrow from "I AM SAVED" and point it to "GOOD WORKS" as another effect to show a chain)

\* Are you a believer? Obey God and do what is right this week not to stay saved, \* but **because** you are saved! Jesus loves you! Obey Him out of love for what He did!

\* Are you not a believer? Receive the promise of salvation today by faith in Jesus!

# Bring It Home

**P**aul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

*To the saints who are faithful in Christ Jesus:*

*Greetings! Grace to you and peace from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

## First

Read Galatians 3:13-14. What is the "cause" of our salvation?

## Second

Read Galatians 3:10. What is the "effect" for those who use good works as a "cause" of salvation?

## Parent Challenge

Read Galatians 3:3. What was so foolish about what the Galatians were doing?

*By His Grace,*

**P**  
aul