

**Rev. George Miller**  
**June 1, 2025**  
**Galatians 3:1-9**

Today, we continue our study of Paul's letter to the church in Galatia. This is the letter that features the poetic lines-

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

Why did Paul write this? What was happening in Galatia and who were the people he was writing too?

But first, let us utilize our imagination- Imagine that during our Lego Workday extravaganza, someone comes in offering you a beautiful masterpiece of a fully constructed Lego Set titled "*Heaven On Earth.*"

This set has everything- flower beds of tulips, rolling hills of trees, bird feeders with robins.

There's a miniature version of Federhofer's with its iconic sign, a teeny tiny Kendrick's Meat Market, and Bagel Boys.

A green field of folk holding flags and a Victory Garden filled with produce.

Imagine being given this free, fully constructed, ready to enjoy Lego set...and someone comes up and says-

"Nope, nunca, nein. You can't have this. If you want this Lego set you must assemble it yourself, following directions *exactly* as written."

"You must also cut off a part of your skin and from now on, no more pork steak at Helen Fitzgerald's or shrimp scampi at Sunset Country Club."

That's why Paul is writing this letter. The Galatian church is being held captive by a fraction of people who are saying "If you want to follow Christ you must work for it."

Paul's response is "Work for it? *You don't even* follow the basic instructions! Why are you denying people the gift of God's grace?"

Galatia was an agricultural community on a trade route that ran east to west, with many markets, places of worship, and mix of cultures.

It is a Greek speaking city with a Roman presence. Some citizens are Jewish families displaced during the Diaspora. Others are Greek settlers known for trade and art.

Many are Celtic mercenaries of German, Belgium, British Isles, and French descent with a deep mysticism and fierce loyalty to family and tribe.

Imagine what this town and people looked like.

Romans soldiers with wavy or straight black/brown hair, olive or light brown skin, deep set almond eyes, jawlines that cut glass, standing about 5 foot 6 with clean shaven faces.

Jewish citizens with similar skin tone, thicker hair. Five foot 5, with beards of all styles and full eyebrows.

Greeks with wavy, curly hair, light olive/tan skin, hazel or brown eyes, with lean builds and short, manicured beards.

Gauls with fair skin; eyes that are blue, gray, green, hazel, and brown; hair that's blonde and auburn; rugged beards, broad shoulders, muscular frames; 5 foot 8.

Imagine the food. Romans, reclining on couches, eating porridge with roasted pork, olives, and fermented fish.

Greeks, sitting around low tables, sipping watered down wine, eating flatbread with grilled fish, fresh figs, and cheese.

Their Jewish neighbors, sitting cross-legged on mats, having matzah served with a lamb-stew filled with lentils.

The Gauls on wooden stools and benches, with an iron cauldron of boiled pork and cabbage, enjoying horns of ale and honey mead.

Imagine what a potluck in this Galatian church looked like!

Imagine all the gods and places of worship.

The Romans worshipped Mars, Minerva, and the Emperor. The Greeks had temples and gymnasiums to worship Zeus and Aphrodite.

The Gauls met in groves, by rivers, with animal sacrifices to Epona and Belisma.

The Jewish people are in synagogues, worshipping Yahweh- the God of Israel, who delivered their ancestors from oppression and injustice, in which meals were sacred.

In other words, no matter what Lego you liked best, there was a set for you in Galatia.

These people of diverse backgrounds are coming together in house churches to have a meal, sing songs, praise God, share their experiences of Christ, break bread and have Communion.

But here is the conundrum- how do all these people come together and be a unified body that follows Jesus Christ, sharing the message of grace, and transforming lives?

What part of their selves and family tradition do they give up? What do they hold onto?

What are the rules? What are the steps? What are the foods they can or can't enjoy?

Do they all need to stop working on Saturday? Be lobster free? Have their sons circumcised?

Can the Romans continue to recline on the couch enjoying fermented fish? Can the Greeks sit at their low tables having meat and cheese?

Can the Gauls still gather around the cauldron to enjoy pork with a large side of ale?

How can the Jews enjoy trivia night if they can't eat White Castle cheeseburgers and pork filled toasted ravioli?

To which Paul says "Guess what- you can have your "jamon" and your Jesus too. You can have your gizzards and still receive grace."

In this Galatian church filled with folks who are 5'4" to 5'9", with eyes blue to brown, hair red to wavy black, and bodies that run from slender to brickhouse, Paul says-

"Everyone is worthy of receiving the Spirit. All of you are justified through faith in Jesus Christ."

"You don't have to turn your back on your heritage or work tirelessly doing many tasks."

"You only need a heart that's ready to receive this Lego Set that Jesus is gifting you."

Paul is saying "If you choose to be Kosher or circumcised, do it because it's your choice. Don't take Lego sets from others, telling them to assemble it with instructions you don't even follow."

Knowing the history of the Galatian church, we appreciate it more when Paul writes-

"There is no longer Jew or Greek, no longer slave or free, no longer male or female; for all of you are one in Christ."

This was the reality in which the Galatian town lived, and people experienced daily.

What all of this means is this-

No matter who we are, where we are from, or how we lived, Jesus is standing beside each of us, offering a fully formed, already assembled Lego set.

Christ is right beside us, knowing our ancestry, knowing the traditions we come from, the foods we like, the rules we set for ourselves.

And Christ is saying “Here, this is for you. Accept this fully assembled “Heaven On Earth” LEGO set and enjoy it.”

Are you ready to receive it? And are you generous enough to let others accept it too?

With these questions, we say “Amen.”