

**Title: Nag Nag Nag - Galatians 3 1-12**

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Read:

<sup>1</sup>You crazy Galatians! Did someone put a hex 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. <sup>2-4</sup>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! <sup>5-6</sup>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. <sup>7-8</sup>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." <sup>9-10</sup>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." <sup>11-12</sup>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."

Think:

Ok Paul we get it. Oh my, he has been banging on about the fact that we can't be good enough to get into Heaven and that's why we need Jesus. It's like scripture for the hard of hearing. Yes Paul we understand that we need Jesus. Maybe these Galatians were a bit slow on the uptake but to be honest I pretty much had got it by the third time you nagged us about it. Well that's how I feel, I don't know about you. Why did Paul go on and on about the fact that it's not about what we do, it's about what Jesus did? Is it possible that during our lives at school, college and work, that we start thinking that it is all about what we do? Jesus shoots from the hip about this as well. Jesus said "without me you can do nothing." So if Jesus thought we needed regular reminders about the fact, that it doesn't matter what we do, then maybe we do need reminding. Maybe when we are successful in our lives we start getting a bit big headed and start doing things our way rather than the Jesus way. We may even appear to be a bit successful. Maybe we pass exams, maybe someone of our mates join our youth group. But if we are relying on our talents then eventually we will crash and burn. We need to use the talents that our God has given us, but rely on Jesus. That is a little different and may take us a little time to get into our heads.

Pray:

Father thank you for my talents. Please help me use my talents but rely on Jesus. Amen.

Action:

Have you invited anyone to your youth group recently? Why not use your talents to invite them. But before you do, pray and ask Jesus who that person should be. Bye for now.