



The Letter to the Galatians - Freed To Be Free.

Galatians 3:15-29 - The Purpose of the Law

Can you remember Galatians 2:20?

Overview:

A unique Gospel Chapter 1-2	Made righteous by Faith Chapter 3-4	Freed to be Free Chapter 5-6
Biographical	Doctrinal	Practical
The Message of the Apostle	The Redemption of Christ	The Walk By the Holy Spirit
The Gospel is true!	The Gospel is superior!	The Gospel is freedom!
Grace Defended	Grace Expounded	Grace Applied
Key Verse: "I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who lives, but Christ who lives in me." (Gal 2:20)	Key Verse: "And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" (Gal 4:6)	Key Verse: "For freedom, Christ has set us free; stand firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Gal 5:1)

Galatians 1-3:14 summary so far...

- Paul was upset with the Galatians for accepting teaching of Jewish legalists.
- Paul defended his divine calling and sanction/recognition as an Apostle in his own.
- He show in the rest of Chapter 2 and 3 that God's promise is received by faith and not by keeping the works of the law.

Galatians 3:1-14:

- Paul asked: Did you receive the Holy Spirit by faith or by your works?
- Were miracles done by faith or by works?
- If we live by the law, we will be cursed. By Christ became a curse for us, so that we may be blessed as true spiritual children of Abraham.

Galatians 3:15-22 - HISTORY:

- From Abraham (circa 2,000 B.C.) to Moses (circa 1,500 B.C.) – Moses is the "intermediary" mentioned in vs 19.
- Genesis 12-end - Abraham promised by God that he would be blessed, that his seed (or posterity) would inherit the land he was sojourning in, and through his seed, all families on earth would be blessed. Abraham had Isaac, then his son Jacob had 12 sons who became the 12 tribes of Israel.
- Exodus - After a 430 year period (vs 17) when they become slaves in Egypt, God raised up Moses who delivered them from Egypt and gave them the law at Mount Sinai.

THEOLOGY:

- The promise of God (standing for the work of God) had to be believed and acted on.
- But the law (standing for the works of men) had to be obeyed and worked at.
- Therefore, God dealt with Abraham by 'promise', 'grace' and 'faith' but that through Moses, it was 'law' 'commandments' and 'works'.

However, God's purpose in the Promise and the Law are to the SAME end!

Galatians 3:15-22:

- We can divide the passage into two.
- Vs 15-18 shows, negatively, that the law did not annul or cancel the promise of God.
- Vs 19-22 shows, positively, that the law actually made the promise of God necessary for us.
- Vs 15: once a will is ratified, it cannot be changed.
- Vs 16: God's unchanging promise were made to Abraham and to his seed (singular).
- Vs 17: The law does not annul the promised covenant.

- Vs 19: Why then was the law given? If God's promise was superior, what was the point of the law? It was added to reveal the depth of our sinfulness (see Romans 3:20).
- Vs 19b-20 – The Law was given through the mediation of angels (Deuteronomy 33:2, Psalm 68:17; Acts 7:53; Hebrews 2:2), but God worked directly to us through His son.
- **"(T)he promise came to Abraham first-hand from God; and the law comes to people third-hand - God - the angels - Moses the mediator - the people."** (Stephen Neil, *Paul to the Galatians*, (World Christian Books: Lutterworth, 1958), page 44)
- Purpose of the law – to show the futility of our good works and the universality of sin (see Psalm 14:3).

"The principal point of the law is to make men not better but worse; that is to say: it shows them their sin, that by the knowledge thereof they may be humbled, terrified, bruised, and broken, and by this means they may be driven to seek grace and so come to that Blessed Seed." (Martin Luther)

Galatians 3:23-29

- Salvation is not only historical and progressive but biographical.
- **"More simply, everybody is living either in the Old Testament or in the New, and derives his religion either from Moses or from Jesus."**
(John Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, (Leicester: InterVarsity, 1984), page 95.)
- Vs 25 – "But now" - a true turning point in our personal histories.
- A Christian is one who is "in Christ" - he has been baptised into Christ (vs 27), put on Christ (vs 27), one in Christ (vs 28) and belong to Christ (vs 29).
- Vs 26 - God is no longer our judge or even our guardian - He is now our Father.
- Vs 28 – We all equally need saving by Christ, made one in Him.
- Vs 29 - And if we are in Christ, then we are also Abraham's offspring. And heirs equally of the promise.
- **"(W)e cannot come to Christ to be justified until we have first been to Moses to be condemned...but we must let Moses send us to Christ."**
(John Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, (Leicester: InterVarsity, 1984), page 102.)