

Bibles???

The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority

This morning we continue our study through the book of Galatians.

By the grace of God, we are going to finish chapter three today.

So, a quick recap of where we stand,

Apostle Paul is writing to a group of churches in which he helped to establish.

After having established these churches, there was a group of teachers called the “Judaizers” that came into the churches and started to spread their own doctrines.

And what they taught was that the gentiles couldn’t really be saved apart from first becoming a Jew and adhering to all the rules and regulations.

In order to be saved or “stay saved” you have to follow this list of “do’s” and don’ts.

And we saw last week that one of the ways that Paul countered the teaching of the Judaizers was by using scripture to remind the churches in Galatia (and us) that if they chose to abandon grace and seek justification through the law – through works, they would certainly fail because man is incapable of following the entire law.

And of course, the consequence of breaking one rule – is death.

But the good news is that Jesus Christ died for us to redeem us.

He paid the price to free us from the curse. He became the curse for us – dying on the cross and freed us from the bondage and burden of having to work for our salvation.

That was God's promise from the beginning.

In our text this morning, Paul is going to fit the pieces together for us by explaining how the promise that God made to Abraham and the law that God gave to Moses –

They don't contradict each other – they both simply point to Jesus Christ.

Let's pray...

[Gal 3:15-29 NKJV] 15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though [it is] only a man's covenant, yet [if it is] confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. 17 And this I say, [that] the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. 18 For if the inheritance [is] of the law, [it is] no longer of promise; but God gave [it] to Abraham by promise. 19 What purpose then [does] the law [serve]? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; [and it was] appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator does not [mediate] for one [only], but God is one. 21 [Is] the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if

there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor [to bring us] to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you [are] Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

As we read our text –

I am pretty sure you noticed how often the word promise or covenant is repeated.

And the thing about promises is that we have a tendency to break our promises.

Right??? Or am I the only one.

But our faithful God never breaks His promises.

And His word is full of promises – thousands upon thousands – and guess what? God has kept all of them and will keep them all.

And the awesome thing about this church is that not even our own disobedience can invalidate His promise to save us through faith in Jesus Christ.

Turn with me to 2 Timothy 2,

[2Ti 2:13 NKJV] 13 If we are faithless, He remains faithful; He cannot deny Himself.

And because God keeps His promises – the Galatians have another reason to reject the claims that were being made by the Judaizers' that keeping the Law was a requirement for salvation.

[Gal 3:15 NKJV] 15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though [it is] only a man's covenant, yet [if it is] confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it.

What is a covenant???

It is a promise, an agreement.

When we buy a house or a car and we sit there for hours initialing and dating and signing until our hand goes numb – what we are doing is entering into a covenant.

I promise to do what is written in the contract.

In my previous job, I worked at a check printing place – I was only there for two years and there were whispers that the company was going to relocate and sure enough, the day came when they told everyone that they were in the process of moving to Texas.

Because the transition was going to take a while, the company offered an incentive program.

They still needed the work to be done and they didn't want everyone to leave.

We were free to seek employment elsewhere, however, if we remained with the company until we were no longer needed – we would get a completion bonus as part of our severance package.

The thing is that we were not told what day would be our last day – it all depended on the work.

So many of us decided to enter into a contract with the company.

One Friday, four other individuals and I were informed that – at 4:00 PM that day – at the end of our shift - we had fulfilled our obligation of our contract.

At lunch we were given our checks – and they already included our completion bonus.

One of the individuals decided to not return after lunch – and the company quickly canceled his completion bonus check.

Did he deserve the completion bonus? No because he decided to change the conditions of the contract.

A contract can be amended but in order to be amended both parties that sign the contract they have to agree on the terms. A **third party** cannot come in and change the conditions of the contract.

My coworker changed the terms – the company never agreed to the terms – therefore, the original contract still holds true.

And that is what Paul is doing here – he is putting it in human terms so that they will understand the argument that he is going to bring forth regarding a covenant that God had made to Abraham.

What covenant is he referring to -

[Gal 3:16 NKJV] 16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

One of the arguments that the Judaizers were pushing to the churches in Galatia was that somehow these gentiles they had to establish a physical connection to father Abraham in order to be a beneficiary of the inheritance of what was promised to him.

And we went over that in our study two weeks ago.

But Paul here in verse 16, wants to make it clear that the promise or the covenant was made not made exclusive to “seeds” which would refer to the Jews - but to Abraham and His Seed – which of course was fulfilled in one person, in Jesus Christ.

In other words, the promise to bless the world came not through the Jewish nation, but through Jesus Christ exclusively to all people, in all places.

And this was God's plan of redemption going back to the fall of man.

Turn with me to Genesis 3,

[Gen 3:15 NKJV] 15 And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, And you shall bruise His heel."

This is a prophecy of Jesus' ultimate defeat of Satan.

God announced that Satan would wound the Messiah (you shall bruise His heel), but the Messiah would crush Satan with a mortal wound (He shall bruise your head).

This was God announcing His plan of salvation, to bring deliverance through the one known as the Seed of the woman.

[Gal 3:17 NKJV] 17 And this I say, [that] the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.

As Paul is writing this, through the Holy Spirit, he is made aware that there will be certain Judaizers who will cave in to his argument that Abraham was made righteous simply because of his faith in God. But then, their argument will be, "Everything

changed when God made a new agreement with Moses!" God gave the law to Moses therefore: it made the covenant with Abraham invalid.

The problem with that argument is that the original contract with Abraham was yet to be fulfilled!

It would be fulfilled in Jesus Christ.

We must understand that the law does not legally or logically have the power to negate the blessing God gave to Abraham through Christ.

Remember a contract cannot be changed by a third party!!!

Only the two parties that entered into the contract can change it.

And Paul is going to show us that, since we are in Christ, the blessing that comes to us is neither given because we keep the law nor nullified by our failure to keep it.

The law is completely irrelevant as it relates to the blessing of God.

And church, that is a fabulous truth!!!

[Gal 3:18 NKJV] 18 For if the inheritance [is] of the law, [it is] no longer of promise; but God **gave [it] to Abraham by promise.**

Church, theirs is a big difference between righteousness that is given by a promise, and righteousness that is earned by the law.

Illustration:

Abraham's promise is like me promising to give you \$30 just because I like you.

Righteousness through the law is like me saying I'll give you \$30 if you come and clean my house.

What Paul is saying, is that if the rules changed with Moses, then we would all be having to earn our righteousness through the law. You would all have to come and clean my house in order to get the \$30.

But the truth is that the promise still stands, because God's contract with Abraham has not changed.

I asked you to make a note of the word gave – because the Greek word that is used here for “gave” it is based on the greek word charis – which is grace.

God's giving to Abraham was the free giving of grace.

[Gal 3:19 NKJV] 19 What purpose then [does] the law [serve]? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; [and it was] appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

If our walk is to be based simply upon believing what God said, receiving His promises, and resting on what He has done, then why was the law given?

What is the reason for even having the law if righteousness comes through the promise???

And of course, the purpose of the law has to do with people's sin.

The Law's purpose is to show man how sinful he is.

It gives us a glimpse of God's standards of righteousness, and shows us how impossible it is for us to achieve them on our own.

The law reveals to us that we in fact do need a Savior.

And it is only then, that we come seeking His grace.

I asked you to make a note of where it says till the seed should come, The law was to be around until Abraham's ultimate seed arrived, until Jesus came.

However, this doesn't mean that when Jesus Christ came that somehow the law is revoked.

Turn to Matthew 5,

[Mat 5:17 NKJV] 17 "Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets.

I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.

Because it is impossible to obtain righteousness through the law, Jesus Christ became the only means of being able to approach God. Because we are made righteous because of Him alone.

[Gal 3:20 NKJV] 20 Now a mediator does not [mediate] for one [only], but God is one.

A mediator is a go-between when two people make an agreement together, and both have responsibilities.

With Moses' covenant with God, both man and God had responsibilities.

Man had to obey. God would bless.

With Abraham's promise, things were different.

The only person with a responsibility was God.

All Abraham did was sit there and get blessed.

[Gal 3:21 NKJV] 21 [Is] the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.

If God could have given a person righteousness through obedience to the law, He would have done it.

But the fact is that it is impossible for a person to achieve righteousness by obeying the law.

The best a person can do is to avoid sin, but even then only a little at a time.

We can't avoid sinning completely.

Eventually we'll break the law.

Even the religious leaders, the Pharisees who portrayed themselves as being self-righteous, Jesus time after time, rebuked them because they were not following the entire law.

They were picking and choosing the laws they wanted to obey – and that is why they would get so upset when Jesus called them out.

That is why Jesus again and again referred to them as hypocrites.

Because they gave the perception that they were justified by the law when in reality they were being condemned by the law by not keeping the entire thing.

[Gal 3:22 NKJV] 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

The scriptures declare that we are all sinners.

The Greek word for all that is used here – it means all, not some or many but all.

Everyone.

And because we are all sinners, we cannot achieve God's righteousness on our own.

And Paul paints a picture of all of us imprisoned as a result of our sin.

We are all prisoners of sin.

The law cannot help us because the law is the one who put us in prison in the first place.

It is only our faith in Jesus Christ that can break us out of our confinement to sin.

And that freedom is given to those who believe.

[Gal 3:23-25 NKJV] 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our **tutor [to bring us] to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.**

I asked you to make a note of the word tutor – because in order to understand what Paul is stating here we must understand what Paul means by the word tutor.

A tutor in those days was not someone you paid \$30/hr to teach your kids physics afterschool.

A tutor in those days was more like a nanny or a temporary guardian.

The purpose of a tutor was to instruct, to protect and to even discipline the child until they reach maturity.

And that is how Paul uses this illustration to relate the relationship between the Jews and the law.

The law was the temporary guardian –

Once the child came of age, he no longer needed the guardian.

So the Law was a preparation for the nation of Israel until the coming of the promised Seed, Jesus Christ.

And once we have come to a relationship of faith, we no longer have to live under our tutor, though we remember the behavior he has taught us.

So we respect our tutor, the Law; but we don't live under him.

We live under Jesus by faith.

[Gal 3:26-27 NKJV] 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

When we place our trust in God, having been a child of the devil, we become adopted into God's family, and become God's children.

Now, Paul in verse 27 is not talking about water baptism.

Note that he says baptized into Christ – not water.

And this speaks about immersing ourselves in Christ.

Many Christians seem content with just “dipping a bit” into Jesus.

Paul doesn't tell the churches in Galatia to simply dip their toes in Jesus.

Or to go up to their knees in Jesus.

God wants us to be fully immersed in Jesus; not sprinkled, not just a part of us dipped.

When a person is immersed in water, you don't even see the person much anymore – you mostly see the water.

When we live as baptized into Christ, you don't see so much of "me" anymore; you mostly see Jesus.

And Paul continues this example by saying that we have put on Christ.

When we become children of God, when our Heavenly father looks at us, He doesn't see all of our sins, He sees who we are in Christ, robed with His righteousness not with our dirty garments.

[Gal 3:28-29 NKJV] 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you [are] Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

The Judaizers were using the law to put up divisions among the people.

Separating those that follow the law with those that don't.

But what Paul argues here at the end of chapter three is, once we put on Jesus, all those divisions come crumbling down.

It doesn't matter if you are a man or a woman, it doesn't matter if you are a Jew or a gentile or if you are free or a slave.

We are all sinners saved by His amazing grace.

Amen

Let's pray...

To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.

Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

