

# The Letter of Paul to the Galatians

A Study by Franklin

## I. Introduction

Paul's Letter to the Galatians deals with their shallow understanding of what Christianity is and what the gospel is clearly saying. Therefore it is an excellent study to clarify our understanding of the gospel.

Galatians helped Martin Luther come to the conviction that we are **saved by faith alone**. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist, gained his understanding of the gospel as he read Martin Luther's commentary on Galatians.

Galatians is known for explaining that walking and living by the Spirit and bearing the fruit of the Spirit must take the place of the law. It is a very important letter for every believer to clearly understand, remembering that: ["My people go into exile for their lack of knowledge."](#) Isaiah 5:13

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**Galatians 1:1-2** [Paul, an apostle not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead, \(2\) and all the brethren who are with me, to the churches of Galatia.](#)

Paul had won many of the Galatians to Christ, and had taught them on following mission trips. But now Paul hears that some Jewish-Christians had come and begun to convince these Gentile believers that they **cannot be saved unless** they are circumcised and keep the Mosaic Law.

These false teachers have spoken against Paul's teaching and authority. And now these new believers are confused and about to go **backwards, from faith in Christ to faith in law-keeping**.

And therefore Paul writes to them and begins with asserting that his apostleship is of the highest order, that he was sent from THE Source, THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY Himself - [not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father](#) (see Acts 9:1-22).

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**Galatians 1:3-5** [Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, \(4\) who gave Himself for our sins so that He might rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, \(5\) to whom be the glory forevermore. Amen.](#)

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, this is a brief yet complete statement of the work of Salvation accomplished by God the Father and God the Son.

- The ACTION: **gave Himself for our sins** Thank You Jesus!
- The PURPOSE: **so that He might rescue us** Thank You Jesus!
- The PROBLEM: **from this present evil age** Thank You Jesus!

And this alone, when understood and believed can bring **Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

This is HOW MUCH HE LOVES US . . . give it serious thought . . . often . . .

## II. Perversion of the Gospel

Galatians 1:6-10 I am amazed that you are so quickly **deserting Him** who **called you** by the grace of Christ, for a **different** gospel;

- **deserting Him** simply means, “**turning away from**” **HIM**. This is **Very Serious** to **turn away** from **The Savior, Jesus Christ**.
- **called you** (see Romans 8:28-30) **by the grace of Christ** – we are called **only** because of what JESUS CHRIST has done for us, by His grace, and **not** because of anything **we have done**.
- **for a different gospel** – The Greek word for “different” is “**heteros**” meaning “another of a **different** kind.”

**(7) which is really not another; There is NOT another gospel.** Gospel means “**good news**” and what they are turning to is **NOT Good News** but **BAD NEWS**. They were being told, if you keep the law you will be considered righteous. As we will see, they are saying a person is not saved by grace but must be circumcised and keep the law. This is Bad News because no one can keep the law. The purpose of the Law was to cause us to see that we are sinners (Romans 3:19-20; 7:5, 7, 9)

**only there are some who are disturbing** (or confusing) **you and want to distort** (change or pervert) **the gospel of Christ.**

- How many people today have been confused and believe a perverted gospel?
- What is an example of a “perverted gospel” today?

TEACHING THE TRUTH –THE TRUE GOSPEL - IS VERY IMPORTANT.

Paul gives a severe warning for anyone who perverts the gospel:

(8) But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel **contrary** to what we have preached to you, he is to be **accursed!** (9) As we have said before, so **I say again** now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be **accursed!**

- Paul is emphatic, ardent, and absolute about the danger of “another gospel.” He says anyone doing this is to be “accursed” meaning: excluded from fellowship and participation in the church.
- Question: Why is Paul so emphatic? Speaking so strong and hard?
- Answer: The seriousness and enormity of this is seen in: Galatians 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the **curse of the Law**, having become **a curse for us**.
  - Being under the Law does not bring salvation but a curse - **the curse of the Law**.
  - JESUS became **a curse for us** to redeem us from the **curse of the Law**.
  - So to return to the Law as a means of salvation is to disregard and cast aside what JESUS did for us on the Cross and therefore WE REMAIN UNDER **the curse of the Law**. Which is: **trusting self for salvation** and not what HE did for us.

(10) For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.

- Paul is not speaking **to please men** with these harsh, condemning words. He is not **seeking the favor of men** and telling them “all is well” as many pastors and teachers do today. Paul is a true **bond-servant of Christ**. The word here is (δουλος) which literally means a **slave**.

There is a different word for servant. A servant serves but is not owned by his master. A slave is permanently “owned” by his master and only obeys. Paul is not serving or pleasing men. His only concern is obeying his Master. (see Deuteronomy 15:12-17)

- We each need to ask our self, am I the LORD’s servant . . . or His slave?

### III. Paul defends his ministry

Throughout his travels, Paul's Gentile converts were challenged by Jewish-believers who were simply **adding** Jesus as the Messiah to their Jewish law and circumcision rite. (converts from any religion to Christianity do the same) This was a perversion of the revelation Paul had received. This was Paul's problem and he had to convince his listeners that this was not just what he was saying but indeed was a revelation from the LORD.

We must realize that finding an **accurate source** for what we believe is **very** important and is the foundation of not only correct history, but also modern-day reporting and research.

#### **Christian teaching is based on these sources:**

1. The revelation of the Old Testament Scriptures.
2. The authoritative teachings of JESUS, the Son of God, to the eleven disciples, and which were recorded in the gospels and in the epistles.
3. The independent revelation to the Apostle Paul.

A wise person will question and research **the source** of everything he reads and is told, before he accepts it as truth. This is especially true concerning what we believe to be truth concerning forgiveness of sin and eternal life.

To help you to understand the authority of the Bible, its source and its message, I strongly encourage you to read the "**Bible Uniqueness**" notes found at the website: [www.treasurehisword.com](http://www.treasurehisword.com)

Galatians 1:11-24 For I would have you know, brethren, that **the gospel** which was preached by me is **not according to man**. (12) For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but **I received it** through a **revelation from Jesus Christ**.

- To carefully read and study the writings of Paul you realize and come to the conclusion that his gospel is not from man because of its complexity and continuity throughout.

(13) For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to **persecute the church** of God beyond measure and tried to **destroy** it; (14) and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more **extremely zealous** for my ancestral **traditions**.

- Paul shares this so the Galatians can see his previous devotion and extreme commitment to traditional Judaism which included the law and circumcision. And, to contrast it with his complete change after Jesus Christ appeared to him! Jesus struck him to the ground outside of Damascus, where he had gone to arrest more Christians. (Acts 9)

(15) **But** when God, who had **set me apart from my mother's womb** and **called me** through His grace, was pleased . . .

- This was always the LORD's purpose and plan for Saul / Paul. You must recognize and know **you were also chosen** and **called** from your mother's womb for the LORD's purpose and plan for your life:

Ephesians 1:4 **just as He chose us** in Him **before the foundation of the world** (this was written to the "saints at Ephesus" not to unbelievers)

2 Timothy 1:8-10 . . . God has saved **us** and **called us with a holy calling**, NOT ACCORDING TO OUR WORKS, but according to **His own purpose** and grace which **was granted us** in Christ Jesus **from all eternity**

Romans 8:28-30 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to **those who are called** according to His purpose. <sup>29</sup> For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be conformed to the image of His Son* . . . <sup>30</sup> and **these whom He predestined, He also called**; and these whom He **called**, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.

(16) to reveal His Son in me **so that** I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, (17) nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus. (see Acts 9:19-22)

Paul is clarifying and asserting that the gospel he preaches did not come from the teaching of another person but it came directly from the LORD JESUS CHRIST Himself by revelation. During Paul's three-day blindness he had visions (Acts 9:12) and revelation about how Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament scriptures and the proper purpose of the Law.

(18) Then three years later I went up to Jerusalem to become acquainted with Cephas, and stayed with him fifteen days. (19) But I did not see any other of the apostles except James, the Lord's brother. (20) Now in what I am writing to you, I assure you before God that I am not lying. (21) Then I went into the regions of Syria and Cilicia. (22) I was still unknown by sight to the churches of Judea which were in Christ; (23) but only, they kept hearing, "He who once persecuted us is now preaching the faith which he once tried to destroy." (24) And they were glorifying God because of me.

#### IV. The Recognition and Approval of Paul's Revelation.

Galatians 2: 1-10      The Council at Jerusalem

Then after an interval of fourteen years I went up again to Jerusalem with Barnabas, taking Titus along also. (2) It was because of a **revelation** that I went up; and I **submitted to them the gospel which I preach** among the Gentiles, but I did so in private to those who were of reputation, for fear that I might be running, or had run, in vain. (3) But **NOT EVEN TITUS**, who was with me, **though he was a Greek, WAS COMPELLED to be CIRCUMCISED**.

- Paul submitted his revelation to the disciples of JESUS, who had been taught by Him, and they agreed and approved Paul's gospel to be from the LORD. And, **they did not add circumcision or keeping the law** to the revelation Paul had received and was teaching.
- What happens to the importance of Christ's death if circumcision is said to be necessary for salvation?

(4) But **it was because** of the **false brethren** secretly brought in, who had sneaked in to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, **in order to bring us into bondage**. (5) But **we did not yield in subjection to them** for even an hour, so that **the truth** of the gospel **would remain with you**. (6) But from those who were of high reputation (what they were makes no difference to me; God shows no partiality) — those who were of reputation contributed nothing to me. (7) But on the contrary, seeing that I had been entrusted with the gospel to the uncircumcised, just as Peter had been to the circumcised (8) (for **He** who effectually worked for Peter in his apostleship to the circumcised effectually worked for me also to the Gentiles), (9) and **recognizing the grace** that had been given to me, James and Cephas and John, who were reputed to be pillars, gave to me and Barnabas **the right hand of fellowship**, so that we might go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised. (10) They only asked us to remember the poor — the very thing I also was eager to do.

This meeting provided the **approval** of the Jerusalem church leaders upon Paul and Barnabas's mission to the Gentiles. This approval contained several elements:

1. **Recognized that they had a legitimate calling of God.**
2. **Recognized them as equals in different fields.** Peter to the Jews and Paul to the Gentiles.

3. **Offered friendship and fellowship.** To offer the "right hand of fellowship" is to pledge mutual friendship, a custom that is confirmed in both secular and Jewish writings.

## V. Paul reveals the hypocrisy of Peter (Cephas)

Galatians 2:11-21 But when Cephas came to Antioch, I opposed him to his face, because he was doing what **he knew to be wrong**. WHY? (12) For prior to the coming of certain men from James, he (Cephas) used to eat with the Gentiles; **but** when they came, he began to withdraw and hold himself aloof, **fearing** the party of the circumcision. (13) **The rest of the Jews joined him in hypocrisy**, with the result that **even Barnabas** was carried away by their hypocrisy. (14) But when I saw that they did (**not walk straight** (literal from the Greek)) about the **truth of the gospel**, I said to Cephas in the presence of all, "If you, being a Jew, live like the Gentiles and not like the Jews, how is it that you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

- Do we sometimes do what Cephas did? Act one way with one group to be accepted by them and live another way with our church friends?
  - This is why Christians are often accused of being hypocrites.
- Do we stand for what we know to be the truth regardless of what others think? (see Eph.2:10; 4:1; Col.1:10; 2:6; 1Thes.2:12)
- This is surprising from Peter who showed such boldness at other times.
  - Healed a lame man then preached a strong message to a large crowd (Acts 3:6, 11-26) was put in jail and then preached another strong message to all the rulers and elders (4:1-12).
  - After a vision was the first to go to a Gentiles home, preached the gospel, they believed and he baptized them (Acts 10)
  - To be accepted by others is a VERY Strong pressure which we all yield to from time to time. Remember, when Jesus was arrested Peter denied that He knew Jesus and that he was one of His disciples (Luke 22:54+). The question always is: "**Who do we want to please?**"
- Why did Paul confront Cephas publicly and not in Private?
  - If he didn't publicly confront the situation, the mission to the Gentiles would shrivel up and die. This issue is at the very center of the gospel.

- How did a public discussion of this benefit the Jewish Christians?
  - They heard the men from Jerusalem, the leaders of the Church affirm that circumcision and keeping the law **was not** necessary.

(15) *We are Jews by nature* (meaning they had the law and tried to keep it) *and not sinners from among the Gentiles;* (who did not have or keep the law)

- This was the thinking and situation before Jesus came. But Jesus came and revealed that salvation is by faith or belief alone (John3:16).

(16) nevertheless **knowing** that a man **is not justified** by the works of the Law **but through faith in Christ Jesus**, even we (Jews) have **believed** in Christ Jesus, **so that** we may be **justified by faith** in Christ and **NOT by the works** of the Law; since **by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified**.

- A very clear statement. Justified means: declared innocent and righteous.

(17) *But if, while seeking to be justified in Christ, we find ourselves also sinners, is Christ then a minister of sin? May it never be!*

- Paul is saying, if I now depend upon Christ for my justification, and I realize that I am also a sinner like the gentiles, where before as a Jew I did not see myself as a sinner, does that mean that Christ made me a sinner? NO! *May it never be!* That's foolishness! (Paul is defending himself here, as in Romans 6:1-2, against a false charge by his opponents.)

(18) *For if I **rebuild** what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor.*

- Paul is saying that if a person turns away to the law as that which justifies, after believing in Christ for justification, that act of returning to the law is proof of his transgression. He says that the law-promoters have become the law-breakers by turning away from faith in Jesus for justification. Because . . .

(19) *For through the Law I died to the Law, so that I might live to God.*

- Paul means he is forever dead to the legalistic and Pharisaic notion that he can save himself by devotion to keeping the law. He is now forever dead to a legalistic understanding of salvation. For him it is now grace - all grace - a grace he will not "set aside" (2:21)!



Romans 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, **you also** were made **to die to the Law** through the body of Christ

Ephesians 2:14-15 For He Himself . . . broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by **abolishing in His flesh the enmity, WHICH IS THE LAW** of commandments contained in ordinances

(20) I **have been** crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but **Christ lives in me**; and the life which I now live in the flesh I **live by faith** in the Son of God, who **loved me and gave Himself for me**. (21) I do not nullify the grace of God, for **if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly**.

- **have been crucified** Verb is “perfect” meaning the action happened in the past (when Christ was crucified) with on-going continuous results to the present, meaning – I am still crucified – dead

Romans 5:8 God demonstrates His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, **Christ died for us**. **Therefore we are dead!**

This truth is a Very Important doctrine throughout Scripture.

1 Corinthians 15:45 **The first man, Adam**, (the “first” or “head” of all born from him) **became a living soul**. (we also, “from him,” became a living soul) **The last Adam** (the “Head” of all born from HIM) **became a life-giving spirit**. (all born from Him received a Spirit of life)

1 Corinthians 15:47 **The first man** is from the earth and earthy; the **second man** is from heaven.

Whatever happens to the “**one you are from**,” your “head,” also happens to you, or is true for you also. For example:

Romans 5:12 Therefore, just as through **one man** sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and **so death spread to all men**, because all sinned.

- The Greek word for “sinned” is in the aorist tense; meaning the action of “sinned” happened at a point in the past. That is – **all sinned when Adam sinned**, the “head” of our race.

- o This truth helps us clearly understand when Paul says: **I have been crucified with Christ**. As a believer Paul was under the "headship" of JESUS CHRIST. And what happened to JESUS applied to Paul – and applied to all believers !

2 Corinthians 5:14 . . . **one died for all, therefore all died . . .**

So Paul can say: **I have been crucified with Christ**  
And every believer can say: **I have been crucified with Christ**

1 Corinthians 15:22 **For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive.**

So, Jesus' death was Paul's death, and Jesus' resurrection was Paul's resurrection. And he can say: **it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me**

And this is TRUE for every Believer !

To live this Truth - to make this Truth real in your life - can give you VICTORY and FREEDOM over EVERYTHING.

For example: you can hit, kick, curse, a dead man and what will he do? NO RESPONSE ! You were **crucified with Christ** you are dead. **But Christ lives in YOU** and **if**:

1. You "know" you are dead (see also Romans 6:6-9), AND
2. You "act" on this truth - make it real in your life (Romans 6:11) - that is "take up your cross," then . . .
3. "Christ can live His life in You" and **He** will turn the other cheek, give His coat, go the extra mile.

**Ask** the HOLY SPIRIT to **remind you** to quote Galatians 2:20 before you respond every time anyone hurts you in any way.

A verse to memorize that will help you is: 1 Peter 2:21-23.

- **I live by faith in the Son of God not by faith in my works.** If you do not "live by faith in Jesus" you **nullify the grace of God**. Nullify means you cancel it out and make it of no value to you and therefore for you, **Christ died needlessly** if you believe that **righteousness comes through the Law**.

- **who loved me and gave Himself for me.** Knowing and Believing this truth – that HE LOVES YOU and TOOK YOUR SIN and DIED FOR YOU, in YOUR PLACE, is the motivation for Faith and Trust in JESUS, The Son of God.

Galatians chapter 3 consists of **five arguments to prove** to the Galatians that salvation is BY FAITH, not by the law.

### Argument 1: Faith Brings Righteousness

Galatians 3:1-5 **You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?**

- **You foolish Galatians** Paul hits them hard calling them “foolish.”
- **Who**, are you listening to? What authority is better qualified for teaching you Truth than I am?
- **bewitched** means to be tricked or deceived to believe something that is not right.

(2) **This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by **hearing of faith**?**

- Being Gentiles, it is obvious that they did not **receive the Spirit by the works of the Law** for they did not even know the law.
- And, the question is asked in such a way that their “receiving the Spirit,” which happens when a person is born again, was a recognizable, eventful event that left no doubt in their minds when they believed. So perhaps they were “filled with the Spirit” and spoke in tongues like on the day of Pentecost or like in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44-46).
- **hearing of faith** Take Special note of this this: **FAITH HEARS !**

And Faith is a Gift from the LORD.

Romans 12:3 **God has **given** to each a measure of faith.**

2 Peter 1:1 **To those who have **received a faith** of the same kind as ours**

Ephesians 2:8 **For by grace you have been saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves, **it is the gift of God****

- (Jamieson, Fausset and Brown Commentary: “**that**” refers to **faith**.)

We hear the LORD because He has GIVEN us FAITH that hears.

John 10:3 To HIM the doorkeeper opens, and **the sheep HEAR HIS VOICE**, and **HE CALLS HIS OWN sheep BY NAME** and leads them out.

- Because of the Gift of Faith, when HE first called your name you responded and were born again.

John 10:4 HE goes ahead of them, and **the sheep follow HIM because THEY KNOW HIS VOICE**.

John 10:27 **My sheep HEAR My VOICE**, and **I know them**, and **they follow Me**

John 8:43-44 **Why do you not understand** what I am saying? It is because **you cannot HEAR My word**. <sup>44</sup> You are **of** your father the devil

John 8:47 **He who is "of" God HEARS THE WORDS OF GOD**; for this reason you do not hear because you are not **of** God.

- **"of"** ἐκ **ek** (ek) denotes origin, where the action or motion proceeds from or out of.

(3) Are you so **foolish**? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being **perfected** by the flesh?

- Paul had already established that **a man is not JUSTIFIED** by the works of the Law **but through faith in Christ Jesus**, (Gal.2:1) and he is now asserting that the Law **cannot sanctify** or make a person **perfect** either.
- **begun by the Spirit** - What The Spirit begins is His work and He will complete it.
- Paul is saying, no one but **a fool** would honestly believe that a person could do the work of the Holy Spirit and live a **perfect** life.

(4) **Have you suffered so much for nothing, if it really was for nothing?**

- From this statement it is obvious that they had suffered ridicule, rejection and perhaps physical abuse because of their faith. And this suffering would be for nothing if they now **turned from faith** to the "works of the Law." This would add to their foolishness.
- Paul adds: **if it really was for nothing?** Causing them to realize that "it was **not** for nothing" because when they "received the Spirit" what they experienced was real with good, dramatic changes in their lives. So why now turn away from the Spirit?

And to finalize his argument Paul asks:

(5) So, does HE who **provides you** with the Spirit and **works miracles** among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by **hearing of faith**?

- “Receiving the Spirit and miracles” was certainly not something man could do or make happen, but a work of the LORD. In no way did “keeping the law” make it happen, they were Gentiles and do not keep the law. It was obvious that it was by the **hearing of faith** (literal Greek translation).
- This means – the **faith** The LORD has given (#1) **hears** what the LORD says, (#2) **he obeys and miracles happen**.
- Every Believer HAS FAITH. Therefore EVERY BELIEVER HEARS. Therefore EVERY BELIEVER should EXPECT and have SIGNS & WONDERS happening as they obey, do and say what they hear.

Acts 4:29-30 And now, Lord, . . . grant that Your bond-servants may **speak Your word** with all confidence, while You extend Your hand to **heal**, and **signs and wonders** take place through The NAME of Your Holy servant JESUS.

## Argument 2: Abraham was Justified by Faith

Galatians 3:6 Just as Abraham **believed God**, and it was reckoned (credited or applied) to him as righteousness” (Genesis 15:6)

- **believed God** Believed is the verb (or action word) of the noun Faith. (faith is the noun & believe is the verb of the same Greek word) and as a result of the **works** (belief / action) **faith was completed** (James 2:22) Because . . . **faith without works is dead**. No Action. (James 2:26)
- Abraham was like these Galatian believers. He lived in “Ur of the Chaldeans” (Genesis 11:28) it was an idol worshipping country with his father and family of whom it was said “**they served other gods**” (Joshua 24:2) **He did not have the Law and therefore was not keeping it**. The LORD **chose** and **called him** and he was **declared “righteous”** by the LORD **because of his faith, his belief**, in the revelation given him and **Abram went forth** (believed / action) **as the LORD had spoken to him**. Gen.12:4

So, he is . . . **the father of all who follow in the steps of the FAITH** (action) **of our father Abraham**. Romans 4:12

(7) Therefore, **be sure** that it is **those** who are **of faith** who are **sons** of Abraham.

- The Jews saw themselves as the descendants born of Abraham, (so do the Muslims but from a different mother) so this concept of **sons of Abraham** because **of Faith** was, and is, a real stumbling block. But this is the way the LORD sees it – HIS family is a family of faith.
- Paul speaks in depth on this issue in his letter to the Romans also (Romans 4) stating that "Abraham is **the father of all who believe**" and all believers are his "sons."

(8) The Scripture, foreseeing that **God would justify the Gentiles by faith**, proclaimed the **gospel** beforehand to Abraham, saying, "all the **nations** (greek – ethnos: ethnic groups, a race) **will be blessed in you**" (Genesis 12:3).

- This is very significant as it was always the LORD's plan to **justify the Gentiles by faith** through **the gospel**.
- The **Law** came more than 400 years later through Moses and **the purpose was**:
  1. **To show us how sinful we are. Not to make us righteous.**  
Romans 7:7 I would not have **known what sin was** except through the law. For I would not have known what coveting was if the law had not said, "Do not covet." (8) But sin, through the law, produced in me coveting of every kind; for apart from the Law sin is dead. (9) I was once alive apart from the Law; but when the commandment came, sin became alive and I died; (10) and this commandment, proved to result in death for me
  2. **And that we need a Savior.** Galatians 3:24

(9) So then **those** who are **of faith** are **blessed** with Abraham, the believer.

- **Blessed** because we have been made **Righteous by faith**, by believing. As HE said to Abraham in Genesis 12:2: "**I will bless you, . . . . And you shall be a blessing.**" We have a responsibility to "**be a blessing**" by sharing the good news, the gospel, **that we are justified by faith and NOT by the works of the law.**

### Argument 3: The Law Brings a Curse

Galatians 3:10 For as many as are **of** the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "**cursed** is everyone who does not abide by **all** things written in the book of the law, **to perform them.**" (Deuteronomy 27:26)

- This is a VERY Serious indictment for anyone looking to the Law for his eternal salvation. Because no one can **abide by all** things written in the book of the law, **to perform them.**

(11) Now that **no one is justified by the Law** before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith"

- The Old Testament knew this to be true. Habakkuk 2:4

(12) However, **the Law is not of faith**; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them (Leviticus 18:5).

- Paul makes this same proof in **Romans 10:5**: (4) For **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.** (5) For Moses writes that the man who practices the righteousness which is based on law shall live by that righteousness.
- But that righteousness is not obtainable, as no one can perfectly keep the law. As Jesus said: Matthew 5:20: **For I say to you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees** (they failed as Jesus pointed out many times. Matthew 23:13-29) **you will not enter the kingdom of heaven.**

We also were without perfect righteousness, the righteousness shown in the Law and we were under the curse of death. But the GOOD NEWS IS:

(13) Christ **redeemed us from the curse of the Law**, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"  
(Deuteronomy 21:22-23)

- The word **redeemed** is *exagorazō*, from *ek* – "out of" or "removal" plus *agorazō*, "to buy or purchase" and "to secure the ownership rights to someone or something, by paying a price."

JESUS CHRIST **fulfilled the Law FOR US** by living a righteous life, no sin. And by **His death** He **purchased us with His Blood and brought us out from under the "curse of the Law."**

- So we do not have to perfectly keep the Law for LIFE. -

And JESUS CHRIST **paid the price of sin FOR US** by His death on The Cross: **to purchase and bring us out from under the curse of death.**

Christ **redeemed us from the curse of the Law !**  
Hallelujah !

Christ redeemed us from the "wages of sin" – Death – and gave us LIFE. (Romans 6:23; 5:6, 8; John 11:25-26; 14:19)

(14) in order that **in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham** might **come to the Gentiles**, so that we would **receive the promise of the Spirit** through **faith**.

- **the blessing of Abraham** was **righteousness by faith**

Romans 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham **believed God**, and it was credited to him as **righteousness**."

Romans 4:9 Is **this blessing** then on the circumcised, or on the uncircumcised also? For we say, "**Faith** was **credited to Abraham** as **righteousness**."

- **the blessing . . .** might **come to the Gentiles**

Romans 4:16 For this reason **it is by faith**, in order that it may be in accordance **with grace**, so that **the promise** will be **guaranteed to all the descendants**, not only to those who are of the Law, but also to those who are **of the faith of Abraham**, who is the father of us all

- **receive the promise of the Spirit** through **faith**. And not by Law.

Acts 2:38-39 Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and **you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit**. (39) For **the promise** is **for you** and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself."

Argument 4. An Enduring Covenant vs. a Temporary Law

Galatians 3:15-29

(15) Brothers, I speak from our own commitments: even a man's covenant when it has been enacted, **no one breaks it or adds conditions to it**.



- Paul is saying, we honor and are faithful to agreements or covenants we make with each other.

(16) Now the **promises** were spoken to Abraham and to **his seed**. He does not say, "And to seeds," as referring to many, but rather to one, "And to **your seed,**" **that is, Christ**.

- Paul is referring to: Genesis 22:17-18 I will greatly bless you, and I will greatly multiply your **seed** as the stars of the heavens and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your **seed** shall possess the gate of their enemies. (18) In your **seed** all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.

When the Word says: "multiply your **seed** as the **stars** . . . and **sand** and your **seed** shall possess the gate of **their enemies**" both are plural examples and seem surely to mean people.

However, when the Word says: (18) In your **seed** all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Paul gives the inspired interpretation that this is speaking of **The Christ**.

And in so doing Paul links this "seed" with the promised "seed" of Genesis 3:15: **And I will put enmity between you** (the serpent) **and the woman, and between your seed and her seed**. He shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."

- **your seed** - The serpents seed refers to his children (John 8:44) or the antichrist, or perhaps both.
- **her seed** - Women do not have seed and therefore this is speaking of the virgin birth of JESUS CHRIST.

(17) What I am saying is this: **the Law**, which **came** four hundred and thirty years later, **does not invalidate** (cancel or end) a **covenant** previously given and established by God, so as to nullify **the promise**.

- This is a strong point. And affirmed by 2 Corinthians 1:20 **For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes** (they stand sure) **therefore also through Him is our Amen** (our agreement to His sure Word) **to the glory of God through us**. The covenant and promise are still valid.

(18) For **if** the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; **but** God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

- Paul is saying the LORD did not change or add conditions to His Promise 430 years later. The Covenant and its Promises still stand.

This brings up the question:

(19) **Why the Law then?** It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until **the seed** would come **to whom the promise had been made**.

- **It was added** The Greek word here is “prostithemi” which literally means “**to put or place before.**”
- **It was added because of transgressions** means:
  1. To make people clearly understand **what sin is** and to realize they have a **sinful nature** and **cannot change** their character **or justify themselves** before God. This is clearly seen in:

Romans 3:19-20 **Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, SO THAT every mouth may be closed and all the world may become accountable to God; (20) because by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.**

2. To **restrain** man’s sinful nature.  
Knowing the Law and the convicting work of the Holy Spirit is definitely a restraining force in believers and to some degree on nonbelievers (John 16:8-11). Our civil laws restrain us because we are afraid of the penalty or the jail. This restraint cannot be regarded as righteousness, rather as an indication of our unrighteousness. If there were no traffic lights to restrain us many people would be injured or killed at intersections. Because the LORD cares He has given us laws to restrain us from injuring ourselves or others. But the laws do not make us righteous. The Law cannot and does not change the heart of man.

Matthew 15:19 **For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders.**

3. To **reveal to each of us our sin**, that we are corrupt, evil, vile perverted, and our **utter need** to depend upon God to **forgive us** and deliver us from the consequences of sin.

The Pharisees believed that by perfect obedience they could be justified by the law and seen as sinless before God. But Paul opposed this misunderstanding:

Romans 3:20 Therefore **no one** will be declared righteous in His sight by observing the law; rather, **through the law we become conscious of sin.**

Romans 7:7-8 I would not have come **to know sin** except through the Law; for I would not have known about coveting if the Law had not said, "you shall not covet." (8) But sin, taking opportunity through the commandment, produced in me coveting of every kind; for **apart from the Law sin is dead.**

Romans 7:13 **In order that sin might be recognized as sin,** it produced death in me through what was good, so that **through the commandment sin might become utterly sinful.**

- having been **ordained** (set in order) **through angels**
- **by the agency of a mediator** (someone who stands between two separated groups to bring them together)

(20) Now a **mediator** is not for one party only; whereas God is only one.

- Who is this mediator Paul is referring to? There are three possibilities:
  1. **Christ** is referred to as the "**only mediator between God and men**" (2 Timothy 2:5) **but** JESUS is the "**mediator of a new covenant**" (Hebrews 8:6; 9:15; 12:24) therefore it is **not** likely that he is referring to Christ as the mediator.
  2. The Jews had a strong belief that the law was mediated through **angels.**

Acts 7:53 **you who received the law as ordained by angels**

Hebrews 2:2 For if the **word spoken through angels** proved **unalterable, and every transgression and disobedience received a just penalty**

Paul's argument seems to be: In the covenant with Abraham, God dealt directly with mankind, but with the Mosaic Law he dealt indirectly, through angels as a mediator. Therefore, the law is inferior to the covenant.

## The Law is Good but Weak (3:21-22)

Paul, trained as a rabbi, has great respect for the law (Romans 7:12; 1Timothy 1:8). **The law is not bad**, only **incomplete** and **never** intended **to replace faith**. And indeed the Law Cannot.

(21) Is the Law then **contrary to the promises** of God? **May it never be!** For **if** a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law. (22) But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the **promise by faith in Jesus Christ** might be **given to those who believe**.

## The Law as a Custodian (3:23-25)

So what was the function of the law? **Restraint** as well as **revelation** of our **sinfulness** until **faith in Christ**.

(23) But **before faith came**, we were **enclosed under the law**, being held in until **faith**, which was later to be revealed. (24) Therefore **the Law** has become our **tutor** so that we may be **justified by faith**. (25) But now that **faith has come**, we are no longer under a tutor.

- **before faith came . . . now that faith has come** These statements indicate that **"faith comes" to us, from without and not originating from within us**. (2Peter1:1; Hebrews 12:2 perfecter; Romans 10:17; John 10:26-27; Luke 8:10)
- **being held in** - the law somewhat restrained our sinful nature.
- **tutor** – the original Greek word means "one who leads and trains a child". The LORD has a family, **"chosen** from the foundation of the world" (Eph.1:4) and the Law was given to be their "child trainer".

The "child trainer" was the attendant whose duty it was to teach the child good manners, and his school lessons. He imposed a necessary restraint on the child's liberty until, with his coming of age, he could be trusted to use his liberty responsibly.

- The purpose being: to bring or **lead us to Christ**
- And when we come to Christ we are **justified by faith** and at that point the HOLY SPIRIT comes **"into"** us and **we move from being "children" to "sons."**

(26) For **you are all sons of God** through **faith** in Christ Jesus.

- The Holy Spirit of Jesus Christ (Rom 8:9; 1Pet 1:11) is now **“in”** us to tell us, lead us and guide us into all truth and how to live a life free from sin, walking pleasingly before the LORD.

Ephesians 4:14-15 As a result, we are **no longer to be children**, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up** in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, Christ.

- In the Old Covenant the Law was “outside” of us, not “in” us, not a part of us. But it was prophesied to be coming within:

Jeremiah 31:33 . . . **I will put My law within them** and on their **heart I will write it**; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people.

Ezekiel 36:26-28 Moreover, I will **give you a new heart** and **put a new spirit within you**; . . . I will **put My Spirit within you** and **cause you to walk in My statutes**, and **you will** be careful to observe My ordinances.

A **“son”** is one who is now of age. With the Holy Spirit **“in”** us we inherently, from within, know what is right and wrong and how we should act or respond and what we should or should not do.

- We will speak more on the subject of being a son a few verses down.

(27) For all of you who were **baptized** into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

- To be “baptized” in the original Greek meant “to be placed into,” submerged or immersed into, with the result that we are now in a new position. No longer the same. And the result of that is:

(28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**.

- This new position takes precedence over and replaces all and any other positions we were in. Nationality is eliminated. Class is eliminated and sex is eliminated as far as the LORD is concerned. With the result that **you are all one in Christ Jesus**. All one and the same.

(29) **And** if you belong to Christ, then **you are Abraham's descendants**, heirs according to promise.

- Because we have believed, and the Holy Spirit is in us, proves that: **you are Abraham's descendants**.

Romans 4:16 For this reason it is **by faith**, in order that it may be in accordance with grace, so that the promise will be guaranteed to all the **descendants**, not only to **those who are of the Law**, but also to those who are **of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all**.

Abraham is the **natural** father of the nation of Israel **who are of the Law**. And the **spiritual** father of all **who are of faith**.

- **heirs according to promise** and not according to the Law (see 3:18) (Isaiah 44:3; Joel 2:28; Romans 9:8-11; Acts 2:38)

## Galatians Chapter 4

(4:1) Now I say, as long as the heir is **a child**, he does not differ at all from a slave although **he is owner of everything**, (2) but he is **under** guardians and managers until the date set by the father.

- **the heir is a child** – **belongs to** and **“of”** the Father but as long as The Spirit is **not “in”** the person they remain a child without full spiritual understanding and therefore need and remain **under guardians and managers** – under the Law as a “child-trainer” (see Gal.3:24) and under the authority of others.
- **until the date set by the father** This is referring to the **Bar-Mitzvah** where a Jewish boy becomes **“of age”** and considered no longer a child. The same is similar to the spiritual **“becoming a son.”**

(3) So also we, while we were **children**, were held in bondage under the basic principles of the world.

- **while we were children** – natural birth born **“of”** God (John 1:13) but no spiritual birth with understanding of that greater dimension.

**“of”** ἐκ **ek** (ek) denotes origin, where the action or motion proceeds from or out of.

- Therefore all we knew and lived by was the “ways” or **basic principles** of the world.

(4) But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law

- **the fullness of the time** – predetermined in the wisdom and counsel of The LORD when all the Law and the Temple had taught man about morality and worship, and that the sacrifices had taught man about what was necessary to forgive his sin was fulfilled (Hebrews 9:22-23).
- The LORD **sent forth His Son** The LAMB OF GOD.
- **born of a woman** – Sin entered the world by one man (Romans 5:12) Adam who was formed or created by God. And only by One Perfect Man - who had no sin because GOD, not man, was his Father- could sin be forgiven and satisfy a Holy God.
- **born under the Law** To fulfill the Law as the “Head” of and for those who are born of Him (John 1:13). And . . .

(5) **to redeem** those who were under the Law, that we might receive the **adoption as sons**.

- **to redeem** – to pay the purchase price to buy back what was originally His. Those under the Law and not under the Law.
- **that we** (Paul is speaking to Gentiles in Galatia) **might receive** (if they believe) **the adoption as sons**.

**We were His Children** (see verse 3 above) but **when we believe we receive the adoption as sons**. No longer children but now more **mature and responsible**.

However, adoption as it is understood in Western culture today is not the meaning and understanding of the Eastern culture as seen in the Greek language of Biblical days.

In the Greek New Testament the word **adoption** is: **huiothesia** (υἰοθεσία) and comes from a compound or joining of: (υἱοί – **son**) and a derivative of (τιθέμε – **to place**)

Giving the meaning: **to place as a son**, figuratively - **sonship**.

The “**placing as a son**” later became a Jewish tradition of recognizing the time when one’s **own child** became **mature**, no longer a child, **but a son** and celebrated with a ceremony.

From the above I question the translation of (υἱοθεσια) as "adoption."

I think that the word should be translated accurately as "**adult son placing**" or "**placed as a son**" and understood by the way Israel understood it and developed the Jewish ceremony of "bar mitzvah."

**The translation of "adoption"** came later with the English translation of the original Greek texts without a clear and complete understanding of the culture of the Middle East.

Western culture and a theological position that we are NOT children of GOD until we believe, saw "placed as a son" as placing a person who was NOT a family member "into the family" when they believed.

So in my opinion the verse is better translated:

(5) **to redeem** those who were under the Law, that we might be **placed as sons**.

Because we were NEVER ADOPTED we were ALWAYS HIS Children – "born from Above" (John 3:3 & 7 literal Greek) and "of God" (John 1:13) and from **before the foundation of the world** (Eph. 1:4-5).

For a study on this subject go to: [www.treasurehisword.com](http://www.treasurehisword.com) click on "Teaching Notes" and at the bottom of the page click on page 3. There you will find the notes on "**Adoption**." Also study the notes on "**Born From Above**."

(6) Because **you are sons**, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!"

- Jesus Christ, Son of God called Him: **Abba, Father** (Mark 14:36)

**Abba, Father** is a Syriac word which means fatherly affection and respect, and parental tenderness, seems to have been used to show His complete submission to his Father's will, and the tender affection He knew his Father had for him. (from Adam Clarke's Commentary) As sons (mature) we have the same feelings for our Heavenly FATHER. See also Romans 8:15

(7) Therefore you are no longer a slave, but **a son**; and if a son, then an heir through God.

- Do not be misled by **no longer a slave** to think that as a slave he is not in the family. Keep in mind 4:1 **as long as the heir is a child**, he does not **differ** at all from a slave although **he is owner of everything**



- As a “child” we are owners of everything but are not given access or responsibility to the privileges of sonship. But as a “SON” we are given access and responsibilities. We must do as Paul:

When **I was a child**, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when **I became a man**, I did away with childish things. 1 Cor. 13:11

(8) However at that time, when **you did not know God**, you were **slaves** to those which by nature are no gods.

- This verse again makes the **truth** that **when you did not know God we were HIS CHILDREN**, we **were slaves** and slaves = children according to verse 4:1.

(9) But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, **how is it that you turn back** again to the **weak** and **worthless** elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

- **come to know God** we came to know God when we were **born again** and the Holy Spirit came into us giving us understanding of spiritual things, which is **sonship**.
- **or rather to be known by God**, Paul is saying, perhaps you do not know God by your actions, but He does know you.
- **how is it that you turn back** having received the Spirit of Sonship with all of it’s wisdom and understanding they were turning back to living as children or slaves following “do this” and “don’t do that.”
- They were not “being led by the Spirit” but by “The Law.”  
Romans 8:14-16 **For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.** <sup>15</sup> For you have not received a spirit of slavery leading to fear again, but you have received a Spirit of adoption as sons by which we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

They were turning back to **a spirit of slavery leading to fear again** and not a Spirit of Love and freedom.

(10) You observe days and months and seasons and years.

- **weak** and **worthless** elemental things,

(11) I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

- Paul is concerned that maybe they are not children of God after all.  
*You will know them by their fruits.* Matthew 7:16 & 20

**12** I beg of you, <sup>a</sup>brethren, <sup>b</sup>become as I *am*, for I also *have become* as you *are*. You have done me no wrong;

**13** but you know that it was because of a <sup>1</sup>bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the <sup>2</sup>first time;

**14** and that which was a <sup>1</sup>trial to you in my <sup>2</sup>bodily condition you did not despise or <sup>3</sup>loathe, but <sup>a</sup>you received me as an angel of God, as <sup>b</sup>Christ Jesus *Himself*.

**15** Where then is <sup>1</sup>that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.

**16** So have I become your enemy <sup>a</sup>by <sup>1</sup>telling you the truth?

**17** They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out so that you will seek them.

**18** But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable <sup>1</sup>manner, and <sup>a</sup>not only when I am present with you.

**19** <sup>a</sup>My children, with whom <sup>b</sup>I am again in labor until <sup>c</sup>Christ is formed in you

— **20** but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for <sup>a</sup>I am perplexed about you.