

The Epistle to the Galatians
Lesson #12 • Galatians 3:23-29

“Heirs with Abraham”

[No. 4 of 5 Statements on Justification by Faith Alone.]

• H A N D O U T •

► This lesson explores Paul's 4th Statement on Justification by Faith Alone. Up to now Paul has focused on the Law's purpose. That perspective was from a negative viewpoint: men are like prisoners, captive under the bondage of the Law.

Now Paul shifts his argument about being justified by Faith and not by the Law, by approaching the subject from a slightly new perspective. Although this change is subtle, it comes from a positive viewpoint. The truth of the message has not changed; it is the same. It is through our faith in Christ, and Christ alone, that we become the sons of God. It is Christ who makes us “one people” unified in Him.

This becomes the really good news of this entire study!

Galatians 3:23-25 • Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the Law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the Law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the Law.

Q: To what does the term “*this* faith” refer?

Q: To what does the phrase “held prisoners by the law” refer?

Q: What is the cultural understanding behind the two similar statements: “Law was put in charge” and “under the supervision of the Law?”

Q: How does this cultural understanding apply to what Paul wrote in the scripture?

Q: What then is the ultimate purpose of the Law?

Q: Considering the ultimate purpose of the Law, what conclusion should we reach about how we, as Believers, should regard the Law?

Paul uses the final verses of Chapter 3 to explore three results which occur when we live and walk by faith, no longer under the Law. The next two verses reflect Paul's initial observations:

Galatians 3:26-27 • You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Q: Why does Paul use the adjective “**all**” when describing the “sons of God?”

Q: Paul describes what it means to be the “sons of God.” How does he describe a “son of God?”

1. A son of God is one who:
2. A son of God is one who:
3. A son of God is one who:
4. A son of God is one who:
5. A son of God is one who:

Q: What does being “**baptized into Christ**” mean?

Q: What does it mean to be “**clothed with Christ?**”

Q: Do these verses teach that all men end up being sons of God?
▶ **The answer is two-fold: one is yes, while the other is no.**

1. Yes:

2. No:

Next is Paul's second observation about those who live by faith and are no longer under the Law.

Galatians 3:28 • There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Q: In Paul's first observation was: "all who have faith in Jesus are sons of God. What is the second observation?"

Paul's second observation uses three examples, which we will look at individually:

1. First Example of the 2nd observation: "Neither Jew nor Greek"

Q: When Paul used the terminology "*Neither Jew nor Greek*" as his example, what cultural problem of his day was Paul highlighting?

He was speaking to the:

The Jews relied on:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

The term "Greeks" referred to:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

Politically speaking:

1. The Greeks viewed the Jews:

2. The Jews viewed the Greeks:

Q: Do we have similar issues playing out in our culture today?

Q: What role or position should the church – the Body of Christ – take regarding these issues today?

2. Second Example of the 2nd observation: “Neither Slave nor Free” ...

Q: What underlying problem was Paul speaking to when he used the phrase “Neither Slave nor Free” as his example?

Paul was focusing on the intense issues of:

Q: Is Paul suggesting that it is wrong for there to be a recognized social or educational differences among Christians?

Q: So then, what is Paul really teaching?

3rd Example of the 2nd observation: “Neither Male nor Female” ...

Q: What problem was Paul speaking to when he used “Neither Male nor Female” as his example?
Obviously he is focusing on:

The last verse of Chapter 3 is Paul's third and final observation about those who live by faith and are no longer under the Law.

Galatians 3:29 • If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Q: What is the summary point that Paul is making in this statement?

Q: What situation in the Church created the need for Paul to make such a summary statement?

Q: Why is the word "SEED" given so much importance in this verse?

The use of the word SEED takes us back to the beginning portion of this chapter.

Galatians 3:16 • The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. The Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.

Q: What then is the Christian's responsibility to the Law? Are we expected to keep the Ten Commandments or are they null and void to the Christian today?



Next Time • Lesson #13

~~ Heirs of God ~~

Galatians 4:1-7