

The Law and Promise

Galatians 3:15-22

When first save, group came thru NS insisting we be more spiritual by keeping their rules, codes of conduct—rid of items in house, not surf as much, submit to their spiritual authority, support their leader \$\$—cold water on joy in Jesus.

Saved by grace thru faith not of ourselves—Paul dealing w/ false teachers who are messing w/ his Gentile converts—telling them they must put themselves under the laws of Moses—Circumcision, Sabbath keeping, rituals & regulations, saying Paul not preaching a full message of what God requires.

Would be like Easter those coming forward & me saying Now that you've received Christ **5** required steps to maintain salvation & eternal life **1**-Weekly mowing Pastor Ed's lawn. **2**-Bi-weekly scrubbing church urinals. **3**-Baking a weekly cookie offering for staff. **4**-Monthly weed waking & window washing of church property. **5**-Brand your forehead w/ seal of CC dove (id) **Also you can lose salvation if don't keep up w/ these. + slack Eds lawn we question your salvation.**

Not good news--Paul says the gospel is *good news* of salvation--by grace & grace alone. God's grace & keeping laws incompatible. Judaizers came in to **undo** all Paul taught & led believers into legalism-no salvation...*like parent raising-teaching kids then outsider comes influences them away.* Judaizers claimed since law came after Abraham's faith it takes priority. Needs to be added even supersedes grace & faith. Saying why give law if grace is enough?—Paul explains—the difference between Grace (what God does) **vs** Law (what I do). Relationship based on faith **vs** religion based on works— promise **vs** duty

15 Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

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Brethren *Adelphos* a=unity - delphos=womb— tender term—not enemies but mis-lead children--Paul's kinsmen *womb-mates*, of the same family

Paul uses human logic to illustrate divine truth— *last will and testament* agreed upon & signed by both parties cannot be changed.

Covenant is a binding document between two parties who agree & obligate themselves. Only changed by mutual consent. So it is w/ Gods covenant of salvation *by grace thru faith & not of yourselves..* If works are added to our salvation it cancels God's promise that you are *save by grace thru faith that not of yourselves it is a gift of God.*

Spurgeon - *If there be in our celestial garment but one stitch of our own making we are all of us lost.*

If on earth sinners can make binding contracts & abide by them w/o change how much more God—**Gen 15** Lit. *'to cut a covenant'* sacrifices cut in two laid in line either side & both parties walk between slain animals *'walk of death'* if either break covenant—God initiated & obligated Himself.

God promised land & seed--*Abraham believed & counted it to him as righteousness* :6—**How do I know?** God ratifies His word-covenant

9 And he said unto him, Take me an heifer of three years old, and a she goat of three years old, and a ram of three years old, and a turtledove, and a young pigeon. 10 And he took unto him all these, and divided them in the midst, and laid each piece one against another: but the birds divided he not. 11 And when the fowls came down upon the carcasses, Abram drove them away. 17 And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.

Matthew Poole 1600's theologian-bible commentator It is Gods own presence passing thru for God is called a *consuming fire*, [Hebrews 12:29](#); & both *smoke* & *fire* are elsewhere mentioned as the signs & means of God's appearance. [Exodus 3:2](#) & elsewhere. And this sense seems to be favored by the following words, it being the custom of persons entering into covenant to pass between such pieces as has been said; & because God has no visible body to do so, therefore he does it in this type or shadow

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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.

Seed referring to Messiah, Jesus Christ **Gen 15: 5 And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. 6 And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness. KJV descendants NAS**

Seed-Heb **Zera** singular (collective singular w/ plural application) **Rom 4:18 Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations; according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.**

Christ is seed w/ plural implications. Abraham faith in seed to come—**Christ**.

Our faith Jesus Christ has come--fulfilled covenant 'walk of death' on cross.

17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.

Law came after promise & cannot change or invalidate what God already ratified. From the time Abraham believed (**seed & counted righteous**) **Gen 15**-came Isaac & Jacob (**God renewed covenant Gen 46:2-4**) going down to Egypt 430 years bondage Ex 12:40 to Moses giving Law was 645 years

Spurgeon God made a covenant w/ Abraham & said that in him & in his seed all nations should be blessed. All believers are in Christ, who is here called Abraham's seed, & therefore they must be blessed. Whatever the law may say or may not say after the covenant was made with Abraham cannot affect it in any way.

John MacArthur the way of salvation in the OT (before Christ came) was the same as in the New Testament

Wuest "God was saving men on the basis of **faith without works** since the time of Adam, or 2,500 years before the **Law** was given.

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.

Law & promise are incompatible—like oil & water—Abraham did not work for his righteous standing before God he simply believed God's promise. If the inheritance is based on law, it would be the payment of a debt and not the faithful fulfillment of a promise."

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Once upon a time Readers Digest Sweepstakes-Ed McMahon show up at door w/ \$100K sweepstakes check. What must I do? Just receive by faith—that is grace, a benefit unearned/undeserved--a gift. But if Ed said I'll give check if shine my shoes. No longer a gift of grace but \$100K shoe shine.

Swindoll The **inheritance** of the blessing was based on **promise**—an unconditional **promise** from God to Abraham that established an irrevocable, eternal relationship. The Judaizers, however, were alleging that the **inheritance** was now based on Law! This represented a complete misunderstanding of the function of the Law of Moses in God's plan & purpose.

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 should come to whom the promise had been made.

4 ways to view *because of transgression*-1 restrain; 2 reveal Rom 3:20; 3 provoke, 4 awaken conviction

In Galveston, Texas, a hotel on the shore of the Gulf of Mexico put this notice in each room - "No Fishing From the Balcony" Yet every day, hotel guests threw in their lines to the waters below. Then the management decided to take down the signs--and the fishing stopped! The Law shows sin & stimulates sin!

Law-**Mirror** doesn't change appearance only shows what's there. **X-ray** doesn't break your arm only reveals if it's broken. So law restrains, reveals, provokes, awakens **But** doesn't make righteous

If no traffic laws-**speed limits-self destruct H-1**. Israel given law to preserve Nation until Christ (promise to Abraham). Also reveals failure to keep law & in need of sacrifice.

*20 Now a mediator is not for one party only; whereas God is only one. 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 all** men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.*

Mediator needed for earthly contracts of two or more but God is one He ratifies and dissolves according to His will. Law served it's purpose but not to add to salvation by grace thru faith.

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Shut up all to enclose together on all sides (**no escape**). The idea is to shut up securely, enclosing on all sides with no way of escape, as with fish "shut up" in a net. When the Law drives you to the point of despair, let it drive you a little farther, let it drive you straight into the arms of Jesus who cares

H A Ironside Perhaps, reader, you have been struggling for years to fit yourself for God's presence, you have been trying hard to work out a righteousness of your own, "*trying* to be a Christian." Let me beg of you, stop *trying*, give it up! You cannot become a Christian by *trying* any more than you could become the Prince of Wales by *trying*. You are what you are by birth. You are what you are as a sinner by natural birth, and you become a child of God through second birth, through believing on the Lord Jesus Christ. The blessing of Abraham is yours when you receive it by faith.

William Barclay "Again and again Paul comes back to the same point. The whole problem of human life is to get into a right relationship with God. So long as we are afraid of God, so long as God is a grim stranger, there can be no peace in life. How can we achieve this right relationship? Shall we try to achieve it by a meticulous and even self-torturing obedience to the law, by performing endless deeds, by observing every smallest regulation the law lays down? If we take that way we are forever in default, for man's imperfection can never fully satisfy the perfection of God; we are forever frustrated, forever climbing up a hill in which the peak never comes in sight, forever under condemnation; but if we simply abandon this hopeless struggle and bring ourselves and our sin to God, then the grace of God opens its arms to us and we are at peace with a God who is no longer judge but father.

Not until the law has arrested and imprisoned a person and sentenced him to death will he be driven to despair in himself and turn to Jesus Christ.