

Pauline Theology – Lesson 06

Christ as the True Israel

Galatians 3:16, 26-29

Galatians 3:16

¹⁶ Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, “And to offsprings,” referring to many, but referring to one, “And to your offspring,” who is Christ.

Galatians 3:26–29

²⁶ for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 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 no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to promise.

- According to Paul, Jesus is the fulfillment of the Abrahamic seed.
 - o All those who identify with Jesus by faith » “sons of God” (v. 26)

Genesis 12:7

⁷ Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” So he built there an altar to the LORD, who had appeared to him.

- Paul’s translation, “Then the LORD appeared to Abram and said, ‘To Jesus Christ I will give this land.’”
- “Seed of Abraham” in OT only refers to people of Israel (not to gentiles) » seed would bless gentiles (Gen. 12:7; 13:15-16; 15:5; 17:8; 22:17-18; 26:4; 32:12).
- Gal: 3:29 » Believing Jews/Greeks (v. 28) = “Abraham’s seed” » References continuation of “true Israel”.

They are “Abraham’s seed” because they are “of Christ” or “belong to Christ”, which Paul equates to being “in Christ Jesus” (v. 28) and having “clothed” themselves “with Christ” (v. 27b). Thus, because they are “in Christ,” who is “the seed of Abraham,” they are in the space of Christ and are also “Abraham’s seed.” They are who he is. – G.K. Beale, *Union with the Resurrected Christ*, 162

Colossians 2:11-14

Colossians 2:11–14

¹¹ In him also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, ¹² having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. ¹³ And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, ¹⁴ by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross.

Since circumcision was the most telltale identification tag of an Israelite, Christ’s undergoing eschatological circumcision in solidarity with his people makes him and those in his corporate space telltale Israelites. – Beale

- Those who believe *already identified* with Christ’s redemptive work.
- Union with Christ by faith existentially = outworking of identification with redemptive historical work.
- Paul/NT » nearly blurs expressions: experience of union (baptism v. 12) | historical (the cross v. 13)
- V. 14 – Emphasizes historical forgiveness