

Ln 7 ... Two Mountains to Which Every Christian Must Go

Galatians 3:23-29

Mountains are some of God's most beautiful creations. I love to go to the Galveston Bay but I have a friend that loves to go to Virginia to breathe the fresh air and marvel at God's awesome power. At times we need to go to the country for rest and rejuvenation. In the Bible, we find **two mountains to which every Christian must go** if we are to have a "path to liberated living." In this section of *Galatians*, Paul reveals the benefits of what God did for us on both mountains. Let's look at these **two** mountains...

Mount Sinai—to Recognize My Sin (3:23-25)

Paul gives two illustrations concerning the purpose of the Law. First, Paul writes: *But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed (3:23). Until the cross, we were shut up, or imprisoned, by the Law, which means the Law kept us in custody.* The Law keeps us in protective custody from our sinful nature.

What does [Colossians 3:5b](#) catalog as things to which our earthly, sinful natures draw us, but that we should *mortify*?

The Law helps us keep from giving in to these evils. Next, Paul writes: *Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ (Gal. 3:24a). The word translated **schoolmaster** (PAIDAGŌGOS, pie-dag-oh-gos´-) is the word from which we get our word "pedagogue" (ped´-uh-gog-), which means tutor or instructor. The Greek word refers to a slave in total charge of an owner's children. He was responsible for escorting the children to and from school, making sure they kept up their studies, and even disciplining them. The Law was our *schoolmaster* so *we might be justified by faith (3:24b).**

Therefore, what does Paul write in [verse 25](#)?

This does not mean the Old Testament does not apply to us today. In it, God reveals His nature and His moral law, which does not change. That's why they are reiterated in the New Testament. In addition, we have the resident Holy Spirit, who enables us to be obedient ([Philip 2:13](#)). Paul is writing about the Law as a *schoolmaster* that completes its purpose when we come to *faith* in Christ.

Therefore, what does Paul write in [Romans 6:14b](#)?

However, the Law still serves as a *schoolmaster*, or tutor, to those who have not yet come to faith. We teach our children God's Law before they are old enough to receive Christ. We teach them it is wrong to steal and to lie. We teach them to honor their parents, etc.

Why do we teach them God's moral law? It shows them the difference between right and wrong, so they will know when they do something wrong. If it were not for the Law, we would not know what sin is ([Rom. 7:7](#)).

We must still live by God's holy and good moral law because it teaches us what sin is. Yet, we should understand the Law was never intended to save us. We must go to **Mount Sinai** to learn God's Law so we can **recognize** our **sin**. However, a "path into liberated living," requires going to another mountain...

Mount Calvary—to Receive My Savior (3:26-29)

What the Law given on Mount Sinai could not do for us, Christ did for us on Mount Calvary. Now that Christ has died for our sins, Paul writes: *For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus* ([3:26](#)). We are not children of God because we obey the Law or by natural birth but by faith in Jesus Christ. Paul continues: *For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ* ([3:27](#)).

This means we are **in Christ**. The phrase "**in Christ**" is found more than eighty times in Paul's epistles. The phrase "**in him**" occurs about another 30 times.

What does [1 Corinthians 12:13a](#) reveal about how we get *into Christ*?

This verse does not refer to water baptism. Water baptism is an outward, physical ordinance a believer submits to and is performed by another believer. On the other hand, spiritual baptism is entirely the work of God. When we receive Christ as Savior and Lord, the Holy Spirit baptizes us into the spiritual Body of Christ, so we are **in Christ**.

When we receive Christ by faith, we are spiritually *baptized into Christ* and *put on Christ* ([3:27](#)). Spiritually speaking, this means God never sees us without our "in Christ" clothing. God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the final sin offering ([2 Cor. 5:21a](#)).

Why, according to the rest of that verse ([5:21b](#))?

After we become Christians, God only sees us clothed in Christ's righteousness. Just like you never see me physically undressed at church, God never sees me spiritually undressed (without my spiritual clothes), which is the righteousness of Christ.

Since we are all baptized into one body and are clothed with the same righteousness, Paul writes: *There is neither Jew nor Greek* ([3:28a](#)). Each day every Jewish male prayed, "Lord, thank you that I am not a Gentile, a slave, or a woman."

However, in Christ *there is neither Jew nor Greek* (Gentile), which means in Christ there are no racial barriers—neither black nor white, Hispanic nor Asian. There are no such distinctions in Christ.

Paul continues: *there is neither bond nor free* ([3:28b](#)), which means there are no social or status barriers in Christ. Therefore, a church should be comprised of all kinds of people—wealthy, poor, educated, uneducated, short hair, long hair, white-collar, blue-collar, no collar, etc. In church, one’s social status shouldn’t matter because we are all one, or the same, in Christ ([3:28d](#)).

Of what does [Romans 2:11](#) remind us about God?

There is a great example of this truth in the book of James, when he writes about two men coming to church services. One is wearing fine clothes, so he is obviously wealthy and influential. He is given special attention and told to take a good seat at the front where everyone can see him. Then, a very poor man comes in and also receives special attention. However, he is told to sit at the back or on the floor so no one can see him. They each are greeted and seated based on social status ([Jas. 2:2-3](#)).

What does [James 2:4](#) tell us about treating people in this way?

If we greet and treat people at church, or anywhere else, based on economic status, we are guilty of judging with evil thoughts, or motives. This is because we make status or appearance more important than character. Furthermore, making such distinctions at church can give the impression this is how God treats people.

Next, Paul writes that in Christ *there is neither male nor female* ([3:28c](#)). In Paul’s day, women were treated horribly, even in Judaism. They had no rights and no recourse when abused; they were simply treated like pieces of property. In New Testament times, Jews perverted what truth found in [Genesis 1:27a](#)?

The Hebrew word translated **man** (ĀDĀM, ah-dawm) means “human being” or “the human species,” so God created **both** Adam and Eve in His own image. That’s why we read: *Male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created* ([Gen. 5:2](#)). Nothing has elevated the status of women like Paul’s writing and the spread of Christianity, declaring men and women equal in God’s sight.

What else does Paul write in [Ephesians 5:25](#)?

Paul summarizes the third chapter of *Galatians* by writing: *And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise* ([3:29](#)). Christ is the true seed, or offspring, of Abraham.

When we place our faith in Him, the Holy Spirit makes us one in Christ. Therefore, we become the true offspring of Abraham.

Having a “path into liberated living” requires going to two mountains:

Mount Sinai—to recognize my sin and **Mount Calvary—to receive my Savior.**

When we go to Mount Calvary, God pours His love into our hearts through the Holy Spirit ([Rom. 5:5](#)).

Therefore, what does Paul write in [Romans 13:10](#)?

If you have been to both mountains, you will live by the **law of love**, rather than the **letter of the law**.