

I. Intro

A. Focus Script.: **Gal. 3:15-17**

¹⁵ Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. ¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.¹⁷ And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. (Gal. 3:15-17)

B. Recap

1. Faith in God has always been the means by which God granted the blessing of relationship with Him.
 - a. **Gal. 3:6: Abraham believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness.**
2. The same “blessing” that God gave Abraham, He promised to grant to the nations through a promised physical descendent of Abraham (Christ).
 - a. **Gal. 3:8: And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand saying, “In you all the nations shall be blessed”.**
3. God made a covenant with Abraham (**Gen. 15:9-20**).
 - a. Cut covenant (involved the shedding of blood).
 - i. Someone, something had to die to ratify the covenant

II. God's Covenant with Abraham vs. The Law (Moses).

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A. God's Covenant with Abraham is Irrevocable

1. Even in earthly covenants (wills and testaments), once it is confirmed, it is.
 - a. No one can add to it or take away from it.
 - b. The death of the testator doesn't diminish the agreement that he/she made while living.
2. The gospel that was preached to Abraham beforehand, established the foundation for all who would come to faith in the Messiah (just like Abraham did).
 - a. In you all the nations of the earth will be blessed.

¹⁶ Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. (Gal. 3:16)

3. The promise was kinda about descendants, but it was more about a Descendant.
 - a. The promise wasn't simply referring to physical seeds.
 - b. The promise was about the Blessed Seed.
4. The promise was not to us (Seeds). The Promise was to Jesus (ONLY). The only inheritance, blessing or promise we have is Jesus.

B. The Law came Centuries Later, but does not cancel the Promise (deliverance by the coming Seed).

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1. God reckoned Abraham to be justified (perfect, flawless, without error). It was a final verdict.
 - a. 430 years later (after Abraham was dead and gone) God gave Moses the law.
2. Earthly testaments (wills) are actually ratified, sealed and set in stone once the testator has died.
3. Impossible that the covenant God made with Abraham was changed (requiring that blessing of God to be achieved by human ability to follow the law).

- C. If the justification could be obtained by following the law, then that cancels the Promise that God made to Abraham (**v. 18**)

*¹⁸ For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise (**Gal. 3:18**)*

- 1. If I can earn salvation (by relying on my strength to follow the law), then God broke His own promise that He made to Abraham and all those who followed after him.
- 2. *“For I am the Lord, I change not.” (**Mal. 3:6**)*
- 3. *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning with Him” (**James 1:17**)*

D. The Law Has a Purpose (**v.19-20**)

*¹⁹ What purpose then does the law serve? It was **added because of transgressions**, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.²⁰ Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. (**Gal. 3:19-20**)*

- 1. Great Exposer
 - a. **Light:** *“For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light; Reproofs of instructions are the way of life” (**Prov. 6:23**)*
 - b. **Mirror:** *“But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer of the work, this one will be blessed in what he does” (**James 1:25**)*
 - c. The law is a light and a mirror that makes sin obvious and impossible to ignore.
 - i. Before we DO anything outwardly, ...sin is in us. We would never know the depth of our depravity unless the ugliness of our hearts were exposed.

- ii. Sin is a missing of the mark (imperfection), but it stems from inner-rebellion and self-dependence.
- iii. "*It was added because of transgressions, ...*" (v. 19a)

Transgression: *to go over a definite, known boundary; to violate a clearly understood law.*

- iv. Paul thought that he had no sin, until the law exposed him (**Rom. 7:7-9**).

*"...I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, 'You shall not covet.' But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death" (**Rom. 7:7-9**)*

- d. The law exposed inward sin (rebellion), by exposing outward transgressions (treason). Obvious that the Promise could never be obtained by human strength and ability.

***The Law was not given to show man a different way to righteousness. It was given to drive mankind away from dependence on self, and show them the ONLY way to righteousness: The promised Seed (Jesus).**

- i. Promise was specific to Jesus (and to all who are in Christ)
- ii. Everything we have is IN Christ!
- e. The light could never clean the room that it exposed as filthy.
- f. The mirror could never fix the face that is ugly.

E. Is the Law (Moses) Opposed to the Promise (Abraham)?

²¹ *Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by*

the law. ²² But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. (Gal. 3:21-22)

1. The law doesn't contradict the Promise of righteousness through faith in Jesus.
 - a. The law actually reinforces the promise of justification by faith in Christ.
2. If the law could've cured sin, it'd be like the oil change light doing your oil change for you.
 - a. Can the CT Scan fix the aneurism it detects in someone's head?
 - b. Can the MRI heal the torn ligaments in the knee of the patient whose hurt it exposed?
3. Surgery corrects the problem. Medication solves the problem. Rest solves the problem.
 - a. The exposer (MRI or CT or X-ray) works hand in hand with the remedy. The exposer is never against the cure.
4. The law confines everyone under the sin category (so that you will know your personal diagnosis clearly).
 - a. **Rom. 3:10**: *There is none righteous. No not one; There is none who understands; There is none who seeks after God. They have all turned aside; They have together become unprofitable; There is none who does good, no, not one.*
 - b. **Rom. 3: 19-20**: *Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore, by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*

III. **Conclusion**: The Law (personal diagnosis) prepared us for the Cure (Faith in Christ).

²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor to bring

us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (Gal. 3:23-25)

- A. Before coming to Faith (reliance on Christ alone), the law functioned as a tutor (custodian, or governor)
 - 1. Provided restraint and provided a picture of what is, as opposed to what should be.
 - a. No power to make what should be... reality.
 - b. If you don't have a heart to trust (rely on) God, the good things of the law become a burden, offensive demands of a heartless schoolmaster.
 - 2. Once we've been operated on, received new limbs, and are completely healed, there is no need to keep harping about the x-rays of the old limbs.
 - a. If you depended on what you yourself had, ... catastrophe.
 - b. But now enjoy the new limb.
 - i. Enjoy your new standing in Christ
 - ii. X-ray Him. Delight in Him.
 - iii. Enjoy the fact that He gave you what you had no ability to produce.
 - iv. He gave you what the X-Ray couldn't produce.
 - v. Everything you see good in the x-ray is about Him and is His doing. Just accept it.
 - 3. The good things of the law depend on your relationship to the Law-Giver
 - a. If God is trusted to do all the work in you, then He is responsible for shaping you and conforming you".
 - b. "*This is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome*" (1 John 5:3)

B. Newfound Sonship

²⁶For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one

in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. (Gal. 3:26-29)

1. If you trust in (rely on, have faith in) Christ Jesus, you are sons of God.
 - a. Not on your own merit.
 - b. You've been lost, overtaken by Christ.
 - c. Lost your personal identity, personal ability... in exchange for the identity and the ability of Christ.
2. It's all Him! No racial, social or sexual distinctions in Him. It's just Jesus!
 - a. No Jew nor Greek (race)
 - b. No slave nor free (social class)
 - c. No male nor female (sexual class)
3. You are just lost in the Person of Jesus, the Promised Seed.
 - a. It's because you're lost in Him, that you're Abraham's Seed (and heirs of the promise)
 - b. Which is centered around Jesus Himself
 - c. He fulfilled the demands of the law on Calvary and He resurrected to fulfill the demands of the law in you.

John Piper: *The law kept people in sin and did not give them life because it was not accompanied by the power of the Holy Spirit to enable people to obey. Wherever the command of God is proclaimed, but the sovereign, regenerating work of the Holy Spirit is withheld, the natural self-centeredness of the human heart will express its rebellion, either by rejecting the law and living in immorality, or by embracing the law and living in legalistic morality. In either case, whether you are a self-reliant moral person or a self-reliant immoral person), the flesh (or the self-reliant ego) is in charge, and the result is bondage to sin, [performance] and finally eternal death.*