

13. Galatians 3:1-5 The Believer's Reality

August 3, 2008

On February 11, 1883 Spurgeon preached a sermon entitled "The Hearing of Faith". This is how he opened his sermon and I think it provides a nice transition to what we are studying this morning: *"A great delusion is upon the heart of man as to his salvation. His ways are perverse. He does not love the law of God; nay, his mind is opposed to it, and yet he sets up to be its advocate. When he understands the spirituality and severity of the law he reckons it to be a sore burden; and yet, when the gospel is preached, and set forth as the gift of sovereign grace, and he is bidden simply to accept it by an act of faith in Christ Jesus, the man professes great concern about the law, lest it should be made void by the freeness of grace. He takes the broken pieces of the two tables of the law and hurls them at the cross. It is not that man loves the law of God, but that he does not love the God of the law: hence he will resort to any pretense to oppose that way of salvation which God has appointed. Doubtless, if it had been possible for the Lord to have set forth another way of salvation, man would have opposed that also, for he is determined to walk contrary to God. Be that as it may, there is a constant animosity in the minds of unregenerate men against the way of salvation by faith in Christ; and to oppose it they set up the pretense of salvation by the works of the law."*

After 8 weeks in our introducing Galatians and studying chapter 1 and after 4 weeks in chapter 2, this morning we proceed into the third chapter. It is my intention to cover this chapter in 3 lessons, but then again that is what I said about chapter 2 so only the Lord knows. When we were only beginning our study of Galatians, I mentioned the standard outline that chapters 1 and 2 are considered to be Personal and when we come to chapters 3 and 4 we come to the Doctrinal section of the book of Galatians. Looking at this transition from another angle, chapters 1 and 2 involved Paul's defending his apostleship and authority and in chapters 3 and 4 we will see Paul defending his message and his doctrine. And while so many make such divisions in their outline of Galatians, there is no absolute cutoff between chapters 2 and 3 as chapter 3 in fact continues much of what was started in the later portion of chapter 2. As I have previously stated, the main doctrine established in Galatians is justification, which we have been looking at in our past two lessons. And just as we have seen in previous weeks, this morning our section of Scripture will again involve Paul asking the Galatians to choose between justification by the faith of Jesus Christ and justification by the works of the law. But before we proceed, let me share with you, Warren Wiersbe's breakdown of chapters 3 and 4. According to Warren Wiersbe, "Paul uses six different arguments to prove that God saves sinners through faith in Christ and not by the works of the law."

- 1) personal argument 3:1-5 [contains 6 questions]
- 2) scriptural argument 3:6-14
- 3) logical argument 3:15-29
- 4) historical argument 4:1-11
- 5) sentimental argument 4:12-18
- 6) allegorical argument 4:19-31

With this breakdown in mind, let's begin reading in chapter.

This morning our text is Galatians 3:1-5 and while I won't specifically be discussing his sermon notes, John Piper says these verses provide an explanatory commentary of Galatians 2:20, which we looked at last time.

3:1-5 ¶ O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you? 2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? 3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? 4 Have ye suffered so many things in vain? if it be yet in vain. 5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

As we have previously seen in the book of Galatians, Paul's zeal for the truth of Jesus Christ is again on display in these opening verses of chapter 3. John Brown in his commentary says about the opening of chapter 3 that we see "deep and powerful emotion, profound sorrow, strong displeasure; but the degree of feeling will not appear excessive when we have attended to the circumstances which called it forth." Truly, Paul opens this chapter boldly – that is by calling the Galatians foolish. And doing so once was obviously not enough as in verse 3 he asks "Are ye so foolish?" Some have found fault with Paul's declaring the Galatians as foolish saying "But doesn't Jesus teach against using such a word?", referring to Matthew 5:22. Turn to Matthew 5:22 and let's see if we can vindicate Paul's exclamation.

Matt 5:22 But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca <empty headed>, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire.

So how could Paul possibly call the Galatians foolish? This is something that the Greek helps clear up. In Matthew 5:22, the word translated fool is 3474 μωρος moros meaning impious or godless. But in Galatians 3, the word used in verses 1 and 3 is 453 ανοητος anoetos *an-o'-ay-tos* meaning unwise, unintelligible, not understanding, or dead in intellect.

Paul is not saying the Galatians are apart from God but rather that they are failing to understand the truth. But again Paul has not given up hope for the Galatians. He still sees hope for restoration. In fact in his question in verse 1 Paul is not asking why did you do this but rather, who led you to do this. Paul is reserving his harsher opinions for those leading the Galatians astray. And he won't really unleash until a later chapter in this book, even though this entire book is a head on confrontation to defend the truth. So with the word foolish understood, let's proceed deeper into Paul's thought in this passage. He continues by asking his first of six questions: "*Who hath bewitched you*". And while it may not be in your version, in the King James Paul continues this question by stating "*Who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth?*" Defending the truth of the Gospel always remains the impetus for Paul's writing this letter. And we too would do well to defend the truth. Proverbs 23:23 admonishes us to "*Buy the truth, and sell it not;...*" And even stronger encouragement comes from 3 John verses 3-4. These two verses say "*3 For I rejoiced greatly, when the brethren came and testified of the truth that is in thee, even as thou walkest in the truth. 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.*" Paul would strongly agree with the Apostle John on this point and I am certain he wishes he could hear such a report about the Galatians instead of what had been hearing.

Paul classifies the confusion experienced by the Galatians as "bewitched". And this word bewitched is likely preserved in every version being read here this morning. The Greek word, βασκαίνω <940> means to bewitch, to charm, to speak ill of or slander, and finally to bring evil upon someone or something by an evil eye. This term of hexing, provides more evidence of the superstition that abounded in the days of Paul and more specifically in Galatia.

During my study of this section, I found online some information on the belief of the evil eye common to Paul's day (see www.marknanos.com/EvilEyeWarning-6-20-03.pdf). And to better understand this bewitching, let me read an introductory excerpt from this 32 page essay.

"Evil eye represents an ancient and wide-spread belief attested throughout the circum-Mediterranean and beyond, for example, among Celtic people <recall the origin of the Galatians was the Gauls or Celts>, and it is still alive to this day in many of these same areas. It is found in Biblical, rabbinic, and Christian writings. Protective devices bear witness to its presence in all strata of society. Moreover, it is still widely attested among Jewish, Muslim and Christian people in Europe and the Middle East, and within ethnic communities which have retained their group identities after emigrating from there to the Americas....The evil eye (note singular, not eyes) is believed to threaten persons and things upon which it falls. This destructive gaze, intentional or not, is feared to harm especially *health* (even to the point of death), *productivity* (the means of livelihood, e.g., farm animals, pottery), and *fortune* (any good that may occur, especially if it comes suddenly or noticeably, bringing prestige or profit). Children and beautiful things or people (especially women, doubly so pregnant ones), and those engaged in rites of passage (birth, marriage, conversion) are considered most vulnerable."

To quickly summarize, the evil eye threatened to take things away. And that idea is what Paul is playing off saying that the Judaizers had taken the Galatians away from the truth of Jesus Christ. Another idea commonly believed to be related to the evil eye is the eye of jealousy or envy. And as I thought on both of these ideas implied by the evil eye, I was reminded of chapter 2:4 which says: *Galatians 2:4 And that because of false brethren unawares brought in, who came in privily to spy out our liberty which we have in Christ Jesus, that they might bring us into bondage:*

Their spying with the intent of bringing into captivity is certainly evidence of envy as well as threatening to take liberty away.

But what were their bewitched eyes failing to see? This is also declared in verse 1 when it says "*before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been evidently set forth, crucified among you?*" This reminded me of Spurgeon's quote from several weeks ago when we studied 1:6. On that verse Spurgeon asked "What is the best way to make them sorry for turning aside from the faith?" And he answered "Why, to set before them Jesus Christ Himself, Who is the very essence and glory of the gospel." Similarly, in another sermon preached in 1880, entitled Men Bewitched, Spurgeon states "there is no way of being kept from this witchery like having Christ Jesus set forth among us, evidently crucified."

And if you will indulge, I want to read some more from this sermon, that I believe contains some very practical advice that we all need to hear. In the sermon "Men Bewitched" Spurgeon writes "Beloved, settle this in your soul, that your sole hope and the main subject of your meditation shall always be Jesus Christ. Whatever I do not know, O my Lord, help me to know thee. Whatever I do not believe, enable me to believe thee, and to trust thee, and to take thy every word as the very truth of God. Beloved, away with the religion that has little of Christ in it. Christ must be Alpha and Omega, first and last. The religion that is made up of our doings and our feelings and our willings is a falsehood. Our religion must have Christ for the foundation, Christ as the cornerstone, Christ as the topstone; and if we are not based and bottomed, grounded and settled upon him, our religion is vain. Paul wonders that any to whom Christ has been the chief thing should ever have been bewitched; and I trow that if Christ be really such to your souls, you will not turn aside through error, but Christ crucified will hold you fast."

Shortly thereafter Spurgeon gives more advice when he says:

“Brethren, if you want to be kept from the modern witcheries, think much of Christ, and go into detail about him. Be familiar with his divine person. Be well acquainted with his relationships, and his offices: know what he is in the covenant of grace, what he is to the Father, what he is to you. Oh seek to know him! He yet surpasseth knowledge; but be students of Christ. Do not have a mere superficial knowledge of him, but seek to know Christ, and to be found in him. This will keep you free from error.”

How much time did you spend this past week thinking about Jesus Christ? If you are struggling with sin and temptation or with carelessness or recklessness in your walk, the solution is the same try dwelling on the beauty of Jesus Christ, as revealed in the Bible, Who was crucified for His people. And this is exactly what Paul had previously done and what he was attempting to do again in this epistle. The phrase “evidently set forth” or as the ESV says “before your eyes” come from the Greek word *prographo* and this word was used in ancient Greece to describe posters similar to what we see today in Most Wanted or Missing Persons posters. Paul is essentially asking, “Have you seen Jesus Christ? Or not?”

According to Kenneth Wuest’s Word Study, the word “crucified” is in the perfect tense and this represents past action realized in the present. So Christ is not being crucified before their eyes now, He has been previously crucified before their eyes. This is not a perpetual sacrificing of the Savior, as with the idolatrous practice of a crucifix. After all in this book of Galatians, Paul has already mentioned the past reality of the death of Christ in addition to its present day impact. In chapter 1:4 Paul told us that Jesus gave Himself for our sins, in 2:20 that we are crucified with Christ, and in 2:21, that “if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.”

Perhaps now you can better appreciate why we opened this morning’s Sunday School with **Hymn #204 – Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus**. The third verse of that hymn declares the same antidote to the problem in verse 1. It says:

His Word shall not fail you—He promised;

Believe Him, and all will be well:

Then go to a world that is dying,

His perfect salvation to tell!

Refrain

Turn your eyes upon Jesus,

Look full in His wonderful face,

And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,

And as this passage in Galatians teaches, those “things of earth” definitely include all aspects of the works of the law.

With that said, let’s proceed to verse 2. I mentioned that Warren Wiersbe points out 6 questions in this section of Scripture, but according to verse 2, there really is only 1 question Paul needs answered to settle his case. And that question is verse 2.

2 This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

In this verse we come to the first formal mention of the Holy Spirit in Galatians. So why does Paul ask about the Holy Spirit now?

I believe the reason is found in 1 Corinthians 6:11, which goes to prove my earlier point that Paul in chapter 3 is merely continuing his argument found in chapter 2. 1

Corinthians 6:11 says *“11 And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.”*

Here we learn that justification is in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God. So really Paul is just continuing to answer the question of “how were you justified?” which he exhaustively answered in Galatians 2:16

Look back there for just a moment: *16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*

So in chapter 3, Paul is asking them to stop listening to anyone else and do a little bit of self-examination instead. Their own lives provide the proof of where their justification comes from. If they are honest with themselves they cannot deny the change that took place and why that change happened – it happened because of the hearing of faith. Martin Luther put this very well when he wrote, “Ye taught and heard the law of Moses every Sabbath, but it hath not been heard or seen that ever the Holy Ghost was given to any through the preaching of the law. But as soon as the hearing of faith, or the gospel came to you, ye received the Holy Ghost.”

But what exactly is the “hearing of faith”. John Brown in his commentary lays out each word as follows: “Hearing” can be the act of hearing or the thing heard. And he says the phrase “of faith” can be the act of believing or it can represent the thing believed.

To answer which meaning is correct, John Brown states as ‘hearing’ is obviously contrasted with ‘working’ and ‘faith’ with the ‘law’ I apprehend that ‘hearing of faith’ is just equivalent to the reception of the gospel”

On this same verse, John Gill says “Now in this way the Spirit of God is received; while the Gospel is preaching he falls on them that hear it, conveys himself into their hearts, and begets them again by the word of truth: and in this way the Galatians came by the Spirit, and which is another aggravation of their folly, that they should enjoy so great an advantage by the Gospel, and yet be so easily removed from it.”

Quickly, let’s finish looking at our text this morning. Continuing in verse 3 Paul asks *“3 Are ye so foolish? having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?”*

Put another way – can something that couldn’t save you, i.e. the law, make you perfect? Obviously this is another rhetorical question but Warren Wiersbe provides an interesting thought on this verse. He writes “When the child of God is born into God’s family, he has all that he needs spiritually; nothing need be added! All that is necessary is that the child have food, exercise, and cleansing that he might grow into maturity. It would be strange if the parents had to take the child to the doctor at one month to receive ears, at two months to receive toes, and so on.”

In verse 4 Paul continues to appeal to their personal experience by asking if their suffering was in vain. Perhaps we have a hard time recognizing this in our day in and in our culture, but the Christians in Galatia had to endure much suffering just for claiming the name of Christ. They lost friends and family. Some lost their possessions and others even suffered physical persecution. But Paul reminds them of this by saying if the way of Christ isn’t the means of justification than so much that you have lost and suffered was for absolutely no good reason.

In the second half of this short verse Paul once again sees a glimmer of hope for their restoration by saying if it be yet in vain. In other words, maybe you did the right thing before and you will do it again.

In the final verse of this morning's text we come to one more type of experience that would have to be examined to find the truth. As was common in the early days of the church, the preaching of the gospel and the regeneration of unbelievers frequently resulted in the working of various types of miracles and in all cases the indwelling of the Holy Spirit and the source of both of these things was and remains divine. But Paul is asking them to recall when these things started happening. Had the many years in which the law had been taught provided such divine gifts or were they something more recent that resulted from the more recently proclaimed gospel.

Lord willing next week we will continue examining the doctrine of justification as we progress deeper into chapter three but to conclude this morning we come to our sixth way of finishing Warren Wiersbe's sentence. **If I want to be a really good Christian, I must have received the spirit by the hearing of faith and not by the works of the law and I must be perfected by this same faith.**

14. Galatians 3:6-18 Abraham's Testimony – Justified by Faith August 10, 2008

Last week as we ventured into chapter 3, we looked at what Warren Wiersbe entitles the personal arguments in which Paul continues to ask the Galatians to consider whether justification is by the faith of Jesus Christ or by the works of the law. In the first five verses of chapter 3 we read 6 questions that Paul asked in order to help restore the Galatians to proper thinking as opposed to continuing to be bewitched. This morning, while I don't intend to continue with Wiersbe's breakdown of chapters 3 and 4, I want us to move into the next section of chapter 3 where we will see the scriptural and the beginning of the logical arguments put forth by Paul. After the sixth question from Paul in verse 5 which asks "5 He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, *doeth he it* by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" Paul draws the Galatians bewitched eyesight away from their personal experience and onto Father Abraham, the very foundational character of the Jewish faith, which is why I asked for Hymn #19 – **The God of Abraham Praise** to be sung this morning (beyond the fact that it was one of my father's favorite hymns).

Most commentators on Galatians agree that the reason Paul changes his focus away from the personal arguments of verses 1-5 is because it is so dangerous to rely on personal experiences. Personal experiences can be counterfeited or misunderstood, and we can certainly see examples of that even to this day where counterfeited experiences are offered up in Jesus' name on a regular basis. Warren Wiersbe even takes this a step further by saying we should "never judge the Scriptures by our experience; we test our experience by the Word of God." But certainly another reason Paul changes their focus onto Abraham is because every good Jew knows all about Abraham – he is at the beginning of their faith and there is little room for misinterpretation of what happened with him. And in this portion of Paul's argument, he appeals to the Scriptures which they were so familiar with and actually cites 7 different passages of the Old Testament Pentateuch.

3:6 ¶ **Even as** Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. 7 Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. 8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, **saying**, In thee shall all nations be blessed. 9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. 10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is **written**, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them. 11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: **for**, The just shall live by faith. 12 And the law is not of faith: **but**, The man that doeth them shall live in them. 13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is **written**, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: 14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. 15 Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; Though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. 16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He **saieth not**, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. 17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

While our text this morning is pretty long, I am planning to move quickly through it by not spending a lot of time on many of the verses. I do this because so many of them are

straight forward and concise statements. And I am also going to deal with a few of them out of sequence. So let's get started.

As I stated before, Paul cites 7 passages in this morning's text and the very first example is in our first verse, verse 6. Verse 6 clearly declares Abraham's condition and his example for us this very day. Verse 6 finds its source in Genesis 15. So please turn to Genesis 15 for a few moments.

Genesis 15:1-6 ¶ After these things the word of the LORD came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward. 2 ¶ And Abram said, Lord GOD, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? 3 And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. 4 And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. 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.

Abraham's acceptance of the Lord's promises leads to being counted or accounted or imputed righteous. As the third verse of our hymn this morning stated ***"He by Himself has sworn; I on His oath depend, I shall, on eagle wings upborne, to Heav'n ascend. I shall behold His face; I shall His power adore, And sing the wonders of His grace forevermore."***

Abraham trusted in the Lord, but this verb in the Hebrew does not indicate that he began to trust but rather that he continued to trust as he had for quite some time – reaching back likely to Genesis 12. According to the interpretation of Rabbi Hirsch, Abraham submitted himself totally to God, placing in Him his total confidence and seeking all his guidance and attitudes in God's teachings."

And even though Jewish tradition held and still holds that a physical relationship to Abraham through Isaac and Jacob implies salvation, verses 7-9 put that concept to rest. Verse 7 says *"Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham."*

But to a Jew this would seem completely contrary to everything they were ever taught. But that is because they choose to ignore what happened all the way back in the beginning. Verse 8 says: *8 And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed.*

So to support his argument, in verse 7, in verse 8 Paul turns to the Old Testament by reminding the Galatians of Abraham's or more accurately Abram's beginning in Genesis 12. Turn there and let's read the first 3 verses to gain the context of Paul's argument:

Genesis 12:1-3 ¶ Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: 2 And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: 3 And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

After quoting Genesis 12, Paul loops back around in verse 9 and says *"9 So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."*

This is why we have hope this morning to be justified apart from the works of the law. Which brings us to verse 10 where Paul argues from the other side of the spectrum by quoting Deuteronomy 27:26. Just as a reminder, Deuteronomy 27:26 is the last curse of the 12 curses declared on Mt. Ebal just prior to Moses' death.

Deuteronomy 27:26 Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.

A Jew was never meant to pick and choose which commandments they would keep. According to Ramban, one of the most famous Jewish sages from the 13th century AD, this means that “every Jew must accept the Torah’s validity in full, and dare not claim that even one of its commandments is not relevant.”

But in addition to Deuteronomy 27:26, we also learn this truth in James 2:10 which says “*For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*”

When come to verse 11 of Galatians 3 we come to what many believe is the central verse of this epistle. It says: *11 But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.*

Identical to Romans 1:17 and Hebrews 10:38, in Galatians 3:11 we find a quote of Habakkuk 2:4 were it was first written “the just shall live by his faith.”

Since it is central to not only our study of Galatians but also to a study of Romans and Hebrews, it must be very important that we make sure this morning that we all have a strong grasp on what this phrase, “the just shall live by faith”, means.

To do this, I want to share with you five word pictures that I came across in studying AW Pink and Horatius Bonar’s sermons on justification as laid out in chapter 2:16.

The first 2 pictures come from AW Pink:

#1 “We are justified by faith and not for faith; not because of what faith is, but because of what it receives... The whole virtue of cleansing proceeds from Christ the object. We receive the water with our hands, but the cleansing virtue is not in our hands, but in the water, yet the water cannot cleanse us without our receiving it; our receiving it unites the water to us, and is a means whereby we are cleansed. And therefore it is observed that our justification by faith is always expressed in the passive, not in the active: we are justified by faith, not that faith justifies us. The efficacy is in Christ’s blood.”

#2 “The righteousness of Christ’s is not mine until I accept it as the Father’s gift. ‘The believing sinner is justified by faith only instrumentally, as he lives by eating only instrumentally. Eating is the particular act by which he receives and appropriates food. Strictly speaking, he lives by bread alone, not by eating, or the act of masticating [chewing]. And, strictly speaking, the sinner is justified by Christ’s sacrifice alone, not by his act of believing in it.’”

The next three pictures are very brief and come from Horatius Bonar and all 3 deal with lessons we learn from the life of Moses and the children of Israel in the wilderness: I

#3 “The work of Christ for us is the object of faith. The Spirit’s work in us is that which produces this faith; it is out of the former, not of the latter, that our peace and justification come. Without the touch of the rod [referring to Moses’ rod] the water would not have gushed forth; yet it was the rock and not the rod that contained the water.”

#4 – “The bringer of the sacrifice into the tabernacle was to lay his hand upon the head of the sheep or the bullock; otherwise the offering would not have been accepted for him. But the laying on of his hand was not the same as the victim on which it was laid.”

#5 – “The serpent-bitten Israelite was to look at the uplifted serpent of brass in order to be healed. But his looking was not the brazen serpent.”

We must never see any act of belief as being the means of justification, rather as Pink pointed out the work of Jesus is our means of justification and our belief is a passive action like hands catching the water that washes them. This is the infinite love that our finites minds must try to grasp in understanding “the just shall live by faith”. May the Lord help us in growing in our understanding of this truth.

But the law is not the means of faith. This is what Paul has established throughout chapter 2 and now again in 3:12 which not only says “the law is not of faith” but also proceeds by quoting Leviticus 18:5. Looking at Leviticus 18:4-5 we see “*Leviticus 18:4-5 “Ye shall do my judgments, and keep mine ordinances, to walk therein: I am the LORD your God. 5 Ye shall therefore keep my statutes, and my judgments: which if a man do, he shall live in them: I am the LORD.”*”

On this text the Jewish Sages say “he shall live in them” means that the commandments were given for the sake of life not death. Unfortunately they took this too far and said this means that if keeping the law endangered life in any way it should not be kept and made it an excuse for not keeping some of the law. But there is another interpretation that I would point out that when I read, reminded me of John Piper’s ministry. According to Rabbi Chiddushei HaRim this verse means “a person should not perform commandments apathetically. Rather we are enjoined to find in the commandments our primary source of joy, enthusiasm, and life.”

But as we all know so well, we all fall short of the glory of God and instead of living in them, we are dead because of the law. This is why Paul once again turns their bewitched eyes onto the crucified Jesus in Galatians 3:13.

*13 Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is **written**, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree:*

And where is this sixth quote “written”? This quote is from Deuteronomy 21:23.

Deut 21:22-23 And if a man have committed a sin worthy of death, and he be to be put to death, and thou hang him on a tree: 23 His body shall not remain all night upon the tree, but thou shalt in any wise bury him that day; (for he that is hanged is accursed of God;) that thy land be not defiled, which the LORD thy God giveth thee for an inheritance.

How blessed we are to know that Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, but that blessing came at such a great price. But that great price accomplished what nothing else can or could. And that brings us to verse 14 which again contains an idea completely foreign to the Jewish mindset.

14 That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

After saying “O foolish Galatians” in verse 1, in verse 15 Paul addresses them as Brethren and in verses 15-18 we come to a transition in Paul’s argument. Having previously established exactly what God had promised, Paul goes even deeper into proving his argument by analyzing what exactly a promise means and to whom the promise was made. Let’s start with who the promise was made to – as seen in verse 16. Simply stated the promise was made to Abraham and his seed. And it is important for us to realize that the promise was made to Abraham and his seed not with Abraham and his seed. This is well spelled out in Hebrews 6:13-18 but we won’t take the time to look at it this morning. But Paul digs deeper by stating a hidden but obvious truth. Between Genesis 12:7 and Genesis 24:7, the seed of Abraham is mentioned 17 times, but we don’t find the true explanation of this seed until we come to the New Testament, and clearly stated here in Galatians. In verse 16, Paul says “*16 Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He **saieth not**, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*” So the promises of God the Father were made to Abraham and the our Lord Jesus Christ.

With that said, the remaining verses we have to look at provide us with evidence of how sure the promises of God.

Paul begins in verse 15 when he says I speak after the manner of men, in other words, everyone knows the truth of what Paul is about to say or put another way, this is common knowledge what I am about to say. And what is this well known fact – a confirmed or valid covenant or promise cannot be undone or changed. And this is all the more true with a promise made within the Triune Godhead. But this statement that a covenant cannot be disannulled or changed is fundamental to understanding verses 17 and 18. Look at these verses one more time.

17 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

In these the law is pitted against promise one more time. And Paul makes it clear that even after 430 years, the covenant of promise could not be altered or disannulled. And since we have the time, as an aside, I would like to quickly look at these 430 years as some consider this a Biblical contradiction or controversy. But it is not.

The problem I am referring to reaches beyond the book of Galatians and encompasses the books of Genesis, Exodus, and Acts. [Genesis 15:13 [400], Acts 7:6 [400], Exodus 12:40 [430], Acts 13:20 [450]]. And in fact, the NIV, NASB, and ESV all differ from the NKJV and the KJV in Exodus 12:40 and that is what leads to this controversy.

The NIV says in Exodus 12:40:

King James Version	New International and other Modern Versions
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Exodus 12:40</i> <i>"Now the sojourning of the children of Israel, who dwelt in Egypt, was four hundred and thirty years."</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Exodus 12:40</i> <i>"Now the length of time the Israelite people lived in Egypt was 430 years."</i></p>

The difference is, did the children of Israel spend 400 years in Egypt or not? Mathematically, the answer is no. Consider that Moses was 80 years old when he went before Pharaoh with his brother Aaron, according to Exodus 7:7. According to Exodus 6, Moses' father Amram lived a total of 137 years, and Amram's father Kohath lived a total of 133 years. And according to Genesis 46:11, Kohath was one of the sons of Levi that entered Egypt with Jacob and the rest of his family. So even if we absurdly assumed the maximum number of years, i.e. Kohath was a newborn in Genesis 46, and died in the year his son Amram was born and if Amram lived 137, and his son Moses was 80, the maximum number of years until the Exodus is definitely less than 350 years. So how do we come to terms with this 430 years? The answer is Abraham and his seed sojourned and then lived in Egypt for a total of 430. Their total sojourning of Abraham and his descendants was 430 years not just their time in Egypt. In fact In Genesis

The chronology would work like this with the clock beginning at the time the promise was made: By tradition, Abraham answered the call of God when he was 75.

Isaac was born 25 years later (Gen 21:5)	25 years
Years until Jacob was born (Gen 25:26)	60 years
Age of Jacob at move to Egypt (Gen 47:9)	130 years
Number of years the family "sojourned in Canaan"	215 total of 215
Number of years the family sojourned in Canaan	215 remaining would be 215
Number of years the family sojourned in Egypt	215
TOTAL Years Between Abraham's Promise and Moses's Law (Gal 3:17)	430

This morning we have seen the sure promises of God as demonstrated as far back as Father Abraham. And that promise continues sure to this day in that the just shall live by faith. From this morning, a seventh way of completing our sentence would be **If I want to be a really good Christian, I must be a child of promise who lives by faith.** May our faithful Father and God grant us such sure faith.

15. Galatians 3:19-4:3 The Law – Part I The Need for the Law September 7, 2008

It's been four weeks since I last taught. And I debated with myself for quite some time whether or not I wanted to cover the rest of chapter 3 in 1 or 2 weeks and then yesterday in the end I decided on 3 weeks. So for the next three Sundays, it is my intention, Lord willing, to focus on one primary topic. That one topic is the law of the God. The law has already been mentioned several times in the book of Galatians and continues to be extensively discussed at the end of chapter 3 and into chapter 4 and in fact it even continues throughout the rest of the book to the very last paragraph of the last chapter of Galatians.

This week I want to begin our adventure by trying to answer the question Paul asks in this morning's text, which begins in verse 19. Simply put, that question is "Why did God give the law or what is the need for the law? Next week Lord willing, I want to spend some time discussing the actual giving of the law and then finally, Lord willing in our third week on the topic, we will examine both the duty of the law and what happens after the law fulfilled its duty. But again, this morning, our focus is going to be establishing "What did God see as our need for the law?" While some may not agree, this is a really hard question to answer and I must be honest that I have struggled with it myself these past few weeks in preparing. I believe this passage if studied long enough in its context of Galatians 3 and 4, will reveal legalistic tendencies in the hearts of all men, and I can say this because it continues to do so to me.

Many today ignore the law in its entirety because they have relegated it to the past alone. Some even have suggested that Christians don't need to even study or know about the law as its time is completely past. But we must understand the purpose of the law – why God gave the law – if we are going to better understand what Christ has done for us. So before we delve into our text, let me lay some ground work by reminding you of what the Gospels tell us that Jesus said about the law.

Matthew 5:17-20 ¶ Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Matthew 5:48 Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.
Matthew 7:21-23 ¶ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

[iniquity = lawlessness]

Matthew 19:16-21 (parallel Mark 10:17-21) ¶ And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life? And he said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God: but if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. He saith unto him, Which? Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother: and, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. The young man saith unto him, All these things have I kept from my youth up: what lack I yet? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me.

So repeatedly the Lord Jesus upholds the glory as well as the high bar established by the law given at Mt. Sinai. But when I last taught a month ago, you may recall we examined Paul's argument that we, just like Abraham, are justified by faith and not by the works of the law. A quick review of that truth can be found by reading the last 2 verses of our previous text from four weeks ago. *Galatians 3:17-18 And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect. 18 For if the inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise: but God gave it to Abraham by promise.*

So with these passages in mind, let's finally look at our text. The text I want to read this morning and for the next couple of weeks reaches into chapter 4, but we will only be focusing on a portion of verse 19 this morning.

3:19-4:3 ¶ Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. 4:1 ¶ Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

Again our question this morning is just like Paul's in verse 19 "Wherefore then serveth the law? Why did God give us the law? But first so that we don't quickly lose our way, what is the law. According to Rabbi Simlai in the 3rd century AD, "Six hundred and thirteen commandments were revealed to Moses; 365 being prohibitions equal in number to the days of the year, and 248 being mandates corresponding in number to the bones [limbs] of the human body." This is the entirety of God's law to Moses. What Paul is not directly talking about are all of the thousands of laws added by the Pharisees to protect the 613 commandments. So if you thought that keeping the law was a means of justification, you would have to keep all 613 of the laws given to Moses at Mount Sinai. But even the Jews today would tell you this is impossible because the temple is not standing and 342 of the 613 commandments require and involve the temple practice. So, a completely obedient Jew today is responsible to keep 271 laws (comprised of 77 prohibitions and 194 positive commands) according to their thought.

But who do we think we are that we can renegotiate the terms of God's law? As John Brown wrote "God will acknowledge no law as His but that which He Himself promulgated". In other words no man-made attempts will suffice. Based on Andrew Fuller's writings John Brown wrote a parable to describe man's attempt at minimizing the law in an attempt at justification by the law. And I would like to read it to you now.

“May I be allowed to speak a parable on this subject? A ship’s crew mutinied against their commander, who was the king’s son; and not only refused to obey him, but threw him overboard with the intention of depriving him of life. Feeling their situation desparate, they commenced pirates, and while disorder and every evil work prevailed among themselves, they carried terror and misery over the ocean and into all the surrounding coasts. The prince, contrary to all probability, reached the shores in safety, and on arriving at his father’s palace, instead of urging the punishment of those who meant to murder him, employed all his influence, and with success, to induce his justly offended parent to lay aside all thoughts of vengeance, and even to despatch immediately heralds of mercy offering a free pardon to them if they would but acknowledge the prince as their saviour and ruler, and submit to be guided by him in all their future proceedings; but reminding them that if they did not accede to this overture of mercy, sooner or later they must fall into the hands of some of his war-vessels, and must count on being dealt with according to the rigour of the law. On the messengers of mercy approaching the vessel, some of the most determined villains were for treating them as they had done their commander, but this proposal being overruled, they were taken aboard, and their sovereign’s proclamation was made in the hearing of the piratical rebels. Some mocked at it; and even the most sober thinking among them, though they were tired of this scene of discord and ravage, both in the vessel and when they were on shore, said that really they could not give the king credit for such extraordinary kindness, nor bring their mind to acknowledge the authority of the prince, but that they would endeavor to behave better as individuals, to establish better order in the ship, and to restrain their compassions from those excesses of cruelty and rapine in which they had formerly indulged, so that if the king’s cruisers should lay hold of them, as they feared might be the case, the king might be induced to pardon them, perhaps reward them for their good conduct.

The time dreaded by them all at last arrived. Their vessel is boarded by the king’s servants in irresistible force, and the whole crew are safely lodged in prison, and in due time brought before the king for judgment. With a calmness of inflexible determination, more appalling than the most furious passion, the sovereign pronounces their sentence. ‘You most causelessly violated your allegiance; you transgressed the law; you in intention murdered my son; yet, on his intercession I proffered you forgiveness – free, full of forgiveness. You refused to give me credit for the generosity I manifested, and dishonoured me by supposing me false and malignant like yourselves. You persisted in contemning my authority and opposing my will. And even such of ou as have not run to the same enormity of licentiousness and cruelty, have formed laws to yourselves. And you have trampled on my grace as well as my authority. You have spurned mercy on the only terms consistent with my honour to offer it; and you have had the insufferable arrogance of attempting to dictate to me in what way I should bestow my favour. You have had your choice, and you must abide by it. As for those men who would not that I should reign over them, bring them forth and slay them before me.”

John Brown’s *An Exposition of the epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians.* Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth Trust; Carlisle, 2001; 168-169.

Such is the law of God we are talking about.

But what good would any of that be even if we could renegotiate the law? Look again at Galatians 2:16 *“Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.”* Simply stated, the law cannot justify any man. In fact Galatians is not the only book that declares this vital truth. According to Acts 13:38-39, Paul, when he was in Antioch Pisidia said *“Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: 39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses.”*

And in the third chapter of Romans, Paul says *“20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin....28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.”*

It was because of the truth of these verses that I asked for **Hymn 212 Nothing But the Blood** to be sung this morning. As this hymn says, For my pardon, this I see, For my cleansing this my plea, nothing can for sin atone, naught of good that I have done, this is all my hope and peace, this is all my righteousness – Nothing but the blood of Jesus. Oh! Precious is that flow, that makes me white as snow. No other fount I know, nothing but the blood of Jesus.

So with the impossibility of altering God’s commandments and the impossibility of keeping all of God’s commands and with the inability of the law to justify, it is only natural that someone would ask the question that Paul raises in verse 19 of Galatians 3. “Wherefore then serveth the law?” And Paul adeptly answers it – It was added because of transgressions.

First it tells us, the law was added. According to *Kenneth Wuest’s Word Studies in the Greek NT* indicates this word “added” implies that the law was both supplementary as well as subordinate. In other words, the law was never given to replace the promise – it was serving God’s purpose of brining about the promise. This is further evidenced by the fact that it says there was time limit on the addition of the law. It was added “till the seed should come to whom the promise was made.” When Jesus Christ came, died, was buried, and rose from the dead, the time of the law was up.

And what was it added for? What was the purpose? Again, the verse says “It was added because of transgressions.” But determining what that means is certainly a topic of debate. In my study I saw two primary interpretations of what this means I want to share them both with you. But regardless of the two views that we will examine in a moment, the word transgression, 3847 παραβασις, parabasis means to go or step beyond. The giving of the law was not to determine that one deed is right and another deed is wrong. Sin and wrongdoing existed before the law. But rather the law was given for the recognition that every wrong deed is definitively a violation of God’s commandment into forbidden territory. And the two sides of the debate that I saw really were based upon which side of the line you were standing on. In the opinion that I saw held by the most men that I read, it looked at the law from the vantage of someone who had crossed over to the wrong side of line. In other words the law made it clear that everyone was to be punished according to the established consequences because everyone has exceeded the fixed limit or boundary God established and they have entered into forbidden territory. According to *AT Robertson’s Word Pictures of the NT* “It was added to make transgressions palpable.” It was given to make it feel like you were in forbidden territory when you sin. The law carried distinct consequences for entering the forbidden, including paying restitutions, bringing specific sacrifices, separation from the camp, and even death. But even before the giving of the law, murder was still sin.

But now there was a clear and established boundary and a clear and established consequence for crossing that boundary. And the clear display of this boundary resulted in more transgression.

John MacArthur is one of the many commentators on this side of the line (in addition to Martin Luther and Warren Wiersbe). And in his commentary on Galatians 3:19, MacArthur says that the law was meant to compel men to recognize their violations of God's standard. According to Martin Luther, "The first use of the law then is to bridle wickedness." "Another use of the law is divine and spiritual, which is to increase transgressions, that is to say, to reveal unto a man his sin, his blindness, his misery, his iniquity, his ignorance, hatred and contempt of God, death, hell, judgment, and the deserved wrath of God." Martin Luther also says "Here the sinner feeleth the intolerable burden of the law, and is quite beaten down, so that being in anguish and terror, he seeketh death." And this feeling quite beaten down aligns well with many other commentators who on this verse cross reference Romans 5:20. To remind you, Romans 5:20 says "*20 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound:*"

If I had to summarize being on this side of the line, I would say those who hold this view, intend to teach that the law made a desperate situation even more desperate. The need for Christ was all the more clear because of the entrance of the law.

Before I proceed to the second view, let me share with you what Charles Spurgeon says on this subject. Spurgeon preached no less than 5 sermons on Galatians 3:19-25 and I have had the privilege of examining each of them at least briefly. In a sermon entitled The Stern Pedagogue, which I plan to discuss further in next two weeks, Spurgeon succinctly says "The business of the law is, first, to teach us our obligations to God." But in another sermon preached in April 1857 entitled The Uses of The Law, Spurgeon preached about 5 uses of the law and they are as follows:

- 1) The first use of the law is *to manifest to man his guilt.*
- 2) The law serves to slay all hope of salvation of a reformed life (future obedience can be no atonement for past guilt)
- 3) The law is intended to show man the misery which will, fall upon him through his sin.
- 4) It was sent into the world to shew the value of a Saviour.
- 5) It was sent into the world to keep Christian men from self-righteousness.

And while I certainly do want to say I or anyone else disagrees with Spurgeon, there is another view that one man put forth that I have become convinced is also right. This view put forth in John Brown's exposition of Galatians, I believe comes from the fact that man was in the state of total depravity, lost without hope, even before the law was given, so what did it matter if the situation was worse, a Savior, the promised Seed was still the only solution to the problem.

So what does this minority view hold as to the purpose of the law? Listen to what John Brown writes on this verse:

“The deluge swept away the whole inhabitants of the ancient world, with the exception of one family, among whom the true religion was preserved. In the course of no very long period, the great body of their descendants, the inhabitants of the new world, became idolaters. To prevent the utter extinction from among mankind of the knowledge of God and the way of obtaining His favour, Abraham was called, and a plainer revelation made to him of the Divine purposes of mercy, and his descendants by Isaac and Jacob chosen as the depositaries of this revelation, till He [Jesus Christ] should come to whom the revelation chiefly referred. In consequence of the descendants of Jacob coming down into Egypt, they gradually contracted a fondness for Egyptian superstitions, and were fast relapsing into a state of idolatry, which must soon have terminated in their being lost among the nations, and the revelation with which they were entrusted being first corrupted and then forgotten, when God raised up Moses as their deliverer, brought them out of Egypt, and placed them under that very peculiar order of things, which we commonly term the Mosaic law – an order of things admirably adapted to preserve them a distinct and peculiar people – and by doing so, to preserve the revelation of mercy through the Messiah, of which they were the depositaries, and to prepare abundant and satisfactory stores of evidence and illustration when the great Deliverer appeared – evidence that He was indeed the person to whom the hopes of mankind had from the beginning been directed, and illustration rendering in some measure level to human apprehension what otherwise would have been unintelligible.”

So in other words, the law was added because of the destructive power of transgressions. The law was God’s ordained and designed manner of keeping a people unto Himself from which He would send His Son into the world. So the law was added to preserve until the time of Christ not to corrupt further until the time of Christ. This is John Brown’s view and it is now mine as well. But I think that the other side is true as well in that no man can possibly read the commands of God and be excused from their consequences.

This morning in our study of Galatians we have begun to see God’s design in the law. The law of God was added to the pre-existing promise of God as a subordinate supplement and it not only unfailingly convicts all men of sin, but it also provided a protective differentiation between the children of Israel and the other nations of the world in order that God’s divine plan of the incarnation of Jesus Christ be accomplished through Abraham.

16. Galatians 3:19-4:3 The Law – Part II The Giving of the Law September 14, 2008

<<Exodus 19:16-20>> 16 ¶ And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled. 17 And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. 18 And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. 19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice. 20 And the LORD came down upon mount Sinai, on the top of the mount: and the LORD called Moses up to the top of the mount; and Moses went up.

<<Exodus 20:18-21>> ¶ And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. 20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not. 21 And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was.

What I just read to you was obviously not from Galatians chapter 3. What I read was Exodus 19:16-20 which records for us the account of God coming down upon Mt. Sinai prior to giving the 10 commandments and then I read Exodus 20:18-21 which took place after the giving of the 10 commandments but before the giving of the rest of the law to Moses. This is our second week looking closely at the law but more importantly this morning, I would have you better understand that the God whose law this is, made Mt. Sinai smoke as a furnace and quake greatly. I believe that if we can catch a glimpse of our Holy and Awesome God and His Holy Law we will better understand the truth of our text in Galatians 3.

This morning we will once again read Galatians 3:19 through Galatians 4:3 but our text for this morning is actually the second half of verse 19 through verse 22 so pay particular attention to that section as I read it.

3:19-4:3 ¶ Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. 4:1 ¶ Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

Last week we examined only the first half of verse 19 which told us why God gave the law. It was added because of transgressions. And you will recall that it had both a beginning and an end. The end being the time when the promised Seed, Jesus Christ, came. And this law both condemned every human without fail, and also helped to preserve the descendants of Abraham until the time of Jesus Christ. This morning, just as I began in reading from Exodus, I want us to look at the giving of the law.

Before we look at what our text says about how the law was given, let me get the Jewish traditions out of the way.

Exodus 18:1 says that the children of Israel came into the wilderness of Sinai in the third month (~May/June) but the day on which the law was given is not clearly stated. Jewish tradition held that the law was given on the the seventh day of the third month, Sivan in the year 2448. Beginning on sundown the 6th of Sivan until sundown on Sivan 7 there is a Jewish holiday – called Shavout or what we more commonly know as Pentecost or the Feast of Weeks. According to Leviticus 23 it is actually an agricultural holiday that takes place 50 days after Passover. Listen now to what a book in my library entitled “The Jewish Holidays – A Guide and Commentary” says about this holiday.

“It celebrates the giving of the Torah, God’s gift to the Jewish people, which is the guide for how we are to live in this world. The Torah is the spelling out of the details of the Covenant that while initiated by the events of the Exodus, is agreed upon and sealed at Sinai. Sinai is more than the receiving of the Torah – it is the experiencing of the Divine, an experience shared by all Jews of all time, for each of us was there and heard the Voice of Sinai. While theologians and scholars may debate what actually happened at Sinai, for the religious Jew Sinai is central to both belief and practice – to belief in a God who care about this world and expects us to strive in our lives to practice what is good and just.... It is at Sinai that the Covenant is finally sealed and accepted as an agreement binding on both parties. It is here that the Torah is given to us as a guide for life.”

In addition to this account, an ancient Jewish Midrashic commentary on Exodus 19 and 20 states that even though the Children of Israel willingly accepted the terms of God’s law, "God held Mount Sinai above the heads of the Jewish people and declared: 'Either you will accept my Torah, or this mountain will be your gravesite'." It continues on saying this is partly why the Children of Israel told Moses “let not God speak with us”.

So that is the Jewish folktale, what is the truth?

According to the second half of verse 19, two parties were responsible for the delivery of God’s law to the Children of Israel. It says “it was ordained by angels” and that there was involvement of “the hand of a mediator.”

But when I read the description of God’s presence at Sinai recorded in Exodus 19 and 20, there was mention of thunder and lightning, there was mention of thick clouds and the smoke of a furnace, there was mention of an exceeding loud trumpet, and there was mention of seismic activity. But there in both passages there was absolutely no mention of angels. So were there angels there or not? Was Paul wrong or exaggerating about what took place when the law was given? Was he just assuming there were angels there because in other great accounts of appearances by God, as recorded by the prophets, such as Isaiah, that God was always surrounded by a heavenly host? The answer – Paul believed what the Scriptures told him – and we should do likewise. He didn’t make anything up about the account or embellish it in any way. Even though Exodus doesn’t mention angels, other portions of the Bible describing this event do. Let me walk you through them for a moment. The first mention of angelic involvement is in Deuteronomy.

Deut 33:2 And he said, The LORD came from Sinai, and rose up from Seir unto them; he shined forth from mount Paran, and he came with ten thousands of saints: from his right hand went a fiery law for them.

Psalm 68:17 The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place.

Hebrews 2:2-3 For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; 3 How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation; which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him;

So even though Exodus doesn't clearly state it, there was an angelic host present at Sinai when the law was given to Moses. On this point Martin Luther wrote "For the law was delivered by angels, but the gospel by the Lord Himself. Wherefore the gospel is far more excellent than the law: for the law is the voice of the servants, but the gospel is the voice of the Lord Himself."

While the Lord Jesus' birth was heralded by an angelic host, the angelic host did not deliver the Gospel – Jesus did. And in our study of Galatians, let me remind you that we have already seen the superiority of the gospel of Jesus over any angelic revelation. Look back to Galatians 1.

Galatians 1:8 But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

The law cannot hold a candle to the gospel of Jesus Christ. With that said what about the mediator or as the ESV says the intermediary?

What I believe Paul is doing in verse 20 is contrasting the covenant of promise and the covenant of the law. The covenant of promise made to Abraham is recorded in Genesis 15. In that section of Scripture, God makes a covenant by Himself with Himself as evidenced by Abraham's vision where the smoking furnace and the burning lamp passed between the animal pieces. It was a unilateral covenant. But unlike the covenant of promise revealed directly from God, the covenant of the law required a go between. A mediator was required between God and man. MacArthur contrasts these covenants by saying "to Abraham, God said "I will" but to Moses he said "thou shalt".

And just as the promise was personally made by God to Abraham, this is exactly parallel to Paul's experience. Again, look back at chapter 1 and this time look at verses 11 and 12.

Galatians 1:11-12 But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. 12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Paul had no mediator for the gospel he received and preached, but the law did, again demonstrating the superiority of the gospel.

But who is the mediator? How many of you think you know who the mediator is? Well when I looked at this verse originally, I would say 100% that the mediator was Moses. Turn to *Deuteronomy 5:5 (I stood between the LORD and you at that time, to shew you the word of the LORD: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount;)* saying,

So I thought there could be no doubt as to Moses being the mediator, but verse 20 muddies this a little.

In the 1850's when John Brown wrote his commentary on this verse, he wrote about a noted Greek Grammarian of his day JB Winer, who 20 years earlier in the 1830's wrote about the phrase "now a mediator is not a mediator of one" and he said that in his studies he had found more than 250 ways to understand this Greek phrase. Two hundred and fifty ways!!!! But wait there is more. Charles Spurgeon in 1890 in a sermon entitled "A Mediator" discussed John Prime who in 1587 called this phrase "an endless labyrinth." Spurgeon goes on to say "Oh," I thought, "here is a nice wood to lose oneself in! Two hundred and fifty meanings!" Turning to a more modern author — a great reader, however — he said he believed that more than four hundred different interpretations had been put upon the passage. This was getting from a wood into a forest — a black forest, where one might lose himself hopelessly. Should I preach from such a text?" And then that is exactly what he does. But I personally have no idea how anyone comes up with 400 let alone 250 let alone a dozen interpretations. But that is neither here nor there.

The law was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator our text says. So what does it mean to have a mediator involved. As Martin Luther says "this word necessarily comprehendeth two, that is to say, him that is offended and him that is the offender: or whom the one hath need of intercession, and the other seeketh none." But "God offendeth no man, and therefore needeth no mediator." Luther also reminds us that "God cannot revoke His law, but He will have it observed. We who have transgressed the law cannot [observe it]". "We are the offenders; God with His law, is the offended. And the offense is such that God cannot pardon it, neither can we satisfy for it." This was the situation that required a mediator to deliver the means of reconciliation. But in even this Moses cannot do the impossible. Luther on this point says "Moses, however, cometh and is made a mediator; he putteth on a veil and covereth his face: but he cannot deliver men's consciences from the terror which the law bringeth." Because of Moses' inability, another mediator had to be found. And Luther continues by telling us what we already know. "That mediator is Jesus Christ, who changeth not the voice of the law, nor hideth it with a veil, nor leadeth me out of the sight of the law; but He setteth Himself against the wrath of the law, and taketh it away, and satisfieth in His own Body by Himself.... Who setteth Himself between God being offended and the offender."

As 1 Timothy 2:5 teaches us "*5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;*"

The author of Hebrews also discusses this mediator three times but let me just read one that summarizes His work so well.

Heb 9:15 And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.

Praise God for our Mediator Jesus Christ.

With that said, let us proceed onto verse 21 where Paul asks yet another question about the law. "*21 Is the law then against the promises of God?*" To which Paul immediately replies "*God forbid*" or certainly not. The law doesn't oppose the promises of God, but rather it cooperates with the promise in fulfilling the purpose of God, as we looked at last week.

Now before we look at the reason Paul gives for the law not being against the promises of God, let me share with you a few other reasons that the law cannot be against or be the enemy of the promise as given by John Brown. One piece of evidence that shows the law is not opposed to the promise is the fact that they have the same Author and that Author, according to Malachi 3:6 changeth not.

Secondly, on this verse John Brown writes that the law is not opposed to the promise, but rather it is subservient since “it was added to secure the fulfillment of the promise” John Brown continues with a third piece of evidence by saying “the law in every form, so far from being fitted to take the place of the promise or the gospel, only proves the necessity of some such plan of salvation as they reveal.” And this third answer from John Brown leads nicely to Paul’s argument or rather re-argument that if the law could give life than that would provide evidence that righteousness could be established by the keeping of the law.

As I look at that statement I am reminded of the 21st verse of the previous chapter, which ended similarly by saying “for if righteousness *come* by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.” The law just cannot meet the needs of man. It does not measure up to the promise of the seed of Abraham. Verse 21 proves once again that there is no possibility of a works based salvation. The promised One, Jesus Christ is our only hope. Perhaps now you can appreciate why I asked for Hymn #175 – Standing on the Promises to be sung this morning. As stated in the third verse of that great hymn, “Standing on the promises I now can see, Perfect, present cleansing in the blood for me; Standing in the liberty where Christ makes free, Standing on the promises of God.”

The final verse of this morning’s text says continues proving that Jesus alone is what mankind needs. Galatians 3:22 is another evidence of the doctrine of the total depravity of man. It starts by saying “*But the scripture hath concluded all under sin*”. And all the commentators agree that it is significant that this verse says “the scripture” and not “the scriptures”. But commentators are not certain what one passage is being referred to. The predominant theories are Psalm 143:2 or Deuteronomy 27:26.

Psalm 143:2 And enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.

Deut 27:26 Cursed be he that confirmeth not all the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, Amen.

And finally with the end of verse 22, Paul again declares justification by the faith of Jesus Christ once again.

This morning we have looked at the giving of the law and the awesome sight it must have been. But we know that men can not fulfill the law in themselves. Our only hope for life comes from the promised seed of Jesus Christ. So to close this morning let me provide a final proof from Spurgeon about our need for Jesus as our Savior. According to Spurgeon, men say “I mean to do better in the future;” to which the law replies, ‘What have I to do with that? It is already due that thou shouldst be perfect in the future; and if thou shouldst be perfect, in what way would that wipe out thine old offenses? Thou hast only done what thou oughtest to have done.’ But the man cries, ‘I do repent of having done wrong.’ ‘Ay,’ says the law, ‘but I have nothing to do with repentance.’ There is no provision in the ten commands for repentance. Cursed is the man that breaks the law; and that is all that the laws to say to him. Over the top of Sinai there were flames exceeding bright, and a trumpet sounded exceeding loud, but there were no drops of the rain of pity there. Storm and tempest, thunderings and lightnings appalled the people, so that they trembled in the camp, and such must be the sights and sounds we witness as long as we are under the law.”

This morning may we render praise to our great Savior, who has freed us from the curse of the law.

17. Galatians 3:19-4:3 The Law – Part II The Giving of the Law September 21, 2008

For the past two weeks we have been closer examining the law of God. In the first week we saw the purpose of the law – It was added because of transgressions. And this law both condemned every human without fail, and also helped to preserve the descendants of Abraham until the time of Jesus Christ. Last week we looked at the giving of the law and we saw that the God who made Sinai smoke was the same God who fulfilled the promise of the Seed of Abraham. I have also been seeking to establish in your mind that the promise is superior to the law. But this morning we are once again going to look at the law but today I want us to see that the law had a duty and that this duty was well fulfilled. But before we look at our text, I want to set the stage with a couple of other passages of Scripture that we have not previously examined. These passages help demonstrate the important duty of the law. The law does not make us sinners. We were sinners before there ever was a law. The law reveals we are already sinners with no hope in ourselves.

Turn first to 1 Timothy 1:8-10

1 Timothy 1:8-10 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully; 9 Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, 10 For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for menstealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

Next please turn to Romans 7.

Romans 7:7-14 ¶ What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. 9 For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. 10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. 12 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. 13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. 14 ¶ For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin.

So no matter what anyone should tell us, the law, as God intended it is not evil. God's assessment of His law is that it is good if used lawfully. It is holy. And it is just. But before we look at our text, let me read an assessment of the law that Charles Spurgeon gave in the Fall of 1874.

“Brethren, read the law of ten commands, and study each separate precept, and you will find that in those ten short precepts you have all the moral virtues, the full compass of your accountability to God, and of your relationship to your fellow-men. It is a wonderful condensation of morals. The essence of all just decrees and statutes lies there. Perfection is there photographed, and holiness mapped out. No one has ever been able to add to it without creating an excrescence [disfigurement], not a word could be taken from it without causing a serious omission. It is the perfect law of God, and tells us exactly what we ought to be; if we are in any degree deficient, we are to that extent guilty before God.”

With that said, let's read for the third week in a row our text. This morning we will look at one more aspect of verse 22 and then Lord willing proceed to essentially the end of the chapter.

Galatians 3:19-4:3 ¶ Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. 20 Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. 21 Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. 22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. 4:1 ¶ Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:

While we looked at Paul's declaration in verse 22 that justification is by faith derived from the doctrine of total depravity, I want us to look at one word I did not focus on last week because in the original Greek, the New American, and English Standard Version it happens to reoccur in verse 23. That word in verse 22 in the KJV is "concluded." In the other translations you may see imprisoned, prisoner, or shut up.

This Greek word is only used 4x in the entire NT and two of those four times are right here in Galatians 3. The word is συγκλειω *soong-kli'-o* (4788), and according to *AT Robertson's Word Pictures of the NT*, the Greek word behind "concluded" in verse 22 and "shut up" in verse 23 implies a lid closed in over a massive chest that could not be opened from the inside, or as a prisoner shut inside a dungeon. AT Robertson gives a third example that comes directly from one of the other 2 uses of the word, in this case Luke 5:6 where Simon Peter and others let down their nets at Jesus' command and encompass a great multitude of fish. That is the idea of this Greek word. So back to Galatians 3:22, men are helplessly trapped in their sin as fish in a net. Not one fish gets away. All have sinned. All men are guilty before God. This is the condition that only the promised Seed Jesus Christ can deliver us from.

But verse 23 says that before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up [like fish]. John Brown calls this being shut up the equivalent to the middle wall of partition in Ephesians 2:14. A stack of restriction that kept the children of Israel separate from the nations. With regard to verse 23, a couple of weeks ago, Brother Hal raised the question of how the law preceded faith. Scripturally, we know that Abraham believed by faith at least 400 years before the giving of the law. So how could the law come before faith? One answer is that it is referring to our individual condition. We all stand condemned under the law before we receive faith in Christ.

As I looked at this, I believe John Gill gives the most succinct explanation. On this phrase John Gill wrote "it is best to interpret it of Christ, the object of faith, who was to come, and is come in the flesh, to fulfil the law; and, by so doing, has put an end to it; and to redeem his people from under it, and to save them with an everlasting salvation; for before this his coming in the flesh, the people of the Jews, of whom the apostle was one, were under the law:"

With that said, I want to proceed to one of the most interesting ideas in all the book of Galatians – as found in verses 24 and 25. Look at the beginning of verse 24 again. *“24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ,”* What interests me most is the word schoolmaster in the KJV. But how should we understand this duty of the law?

The Greek word is παιδαγωγος (3807) *pie-dag-o-gos*’ from which we get our English word pedagogue. The KJV, as I have read, uses the word schoolmaster. With regard to some of the other versions, the New American Standard translates this word tutor, the NIV calls it the one in charge and the English Standard Version uses the word guardian. Because of my interest in this word, I dug a little deeper and looked at Tyndale’s & Wycliffe’s interpretations. Not surprisingly Tyndale used the word schoolmaster, which the KJV picked up, but Wycliffe uses a different word from all others – Wycliffe used the title “under-master”. But the word paidagogos does not convey the idea of a preceptor and it is not the word didaskalos or teacher. For this reason so many find fault with the word schoolmaster that the KJV and Tyndale use, but really no English term does it justice. It is a foreign concept to our minds. Ralph Earle’s Word Meanings in the NT provides several other translations including “slave-guardian”, “child conductor”, and the literal translation “child leader” [from pais child and ago to lead]. Some suggest that it would be the male equivalent to a governess. Unlike our situation, when Paul uses this word, it was certainly well understood by the Galatians. This was a common job in their day. According to the Greek historian Plutarch, the pedagogue was another person the child was to show the utmost respect to in addition to their father.

Again, this duty has nothing to do with a present day school teacher. In the better off Greek and Roman families of Paul’s day, the pedagogue was a well-educated slave charged by their master to provide complete supervision over the master’s son. This immediately demonstrates a high amount of trust that a father would have in a slave such that they turn their son over to them for oversight. According to AT Robertson, the ward of the pedagogue would be a boy between the age of 6 and 16 (others suggest as late as 24 years old).

Since I am only a novice with Greek, let me share with you what some of the language experts say. According to Kenneth Wuest, the pedagogue watched over his ward’s outward behavior and took charge over him whenever he went away from home, for instance when he traveled to school. AT Robertson says the pedagogue watched his behavior at home and also attended to him when he went away from home, such as to school. Ralph Earle, in his Word Meanings in the NT, cites another expert simply referred to by the name Alford, who defines the pedagogue as “a faithful slave entrusted with the care of the boy from his tender years till puberty, to keep him from evil physical and moral, and accompany him to his amusements and studies”.

The duty of the pedagogue is well summarized in the two words: restraining and chastising. And this well summarizes the law. But I remind you of our text once again to see how the law served in this capacity. Verses 24 and 25 say *“24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster.”*

And even though you may think I have beaten this word to death, let me also share with you what Charles Spurgeon says about this word. I would love to read you the entire sermon, but that would obviously take a lot more time than I have so let a few excerpts suffice.

In his sermon entitled Stern Pedagogue, Spurgeon says this:

“A schoolmaster nowadays is not at all like the personage Paul intended. He speaks of a pedagogue, an official seldom if ever now seen among men. This was not a person who actually officiated as master in the school, and gave instruction in the school itself; but one a slave generally, who was set to take the boys to school, and to watch over them, and to be a sort of general supervisor of them, both in school and out of school, and at all times. A pedagogue was very generally employed in the training of the young; indeed, it was a common and customary thing for the sons of the Greek and Roman nobility to have appointed over them some trustworthy servant of the family who took them in charge. The boys were entirely under these servants; and thus had their spirits broken in, and their vivacity restrained. As a rule, these pedagogues were very stern and strict. They used the rod freely, not to say cruelly, and the condition of the boys was sometimes no better than slavery. The boys (as it was supposed to be for their good) were kept in perpetual fear. Their recreations were restricted; even their walks were under the surveillance of the grim pedagogues. They were sternly held in check in all points, and were thus disciplined for the battle of life. As for the young women, they also had some elderly Roman of grim appearance who tried to keep them out of mischief, and suppress anything like cheerfulness or girlish glee. It was considered necessary for young people that they should suffer from rigid discipline and bear the yoke in their youth; so they were all put under pedagogues, whoever they might be, pedagogues armed with penalties but devoid of sympathies.”

“Having done that, the law acts as a schoolmaster next by showing us our sinfulness. We are naturally prone to account ourselves very good. Our own opinion of ourselves is seldom too low; most generally it is a rather high one; but just as a stern pedagogue would say to a boy who was getting a little proud, ‘Come along, sir; I must take you down a little;’ So the law takes us down. It says, ‘Look at that precept; you have not kept that; and consider this other precept, for you appear to have forgotten it.’”

“When the law has carried our education thus far, its next business is to sweep away all our excuses, and stop our mouths as to all self-justifying pleas.”

“‘But I have been better than others.’ But, says the law, ‘If thou hast not perfectly walked in all the ways of the Lord thy God to do them, I have nothing to do with comparing thee with others: for this is my sentence, ‘Cursed is every man that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them’”

“The law is our schoolmaster to whip us to Christ; our pedagogue to flog us and beat us till we are heartily sick of self, and look for our hope and confidence to some other source.”

Hopefully now we all better understand the word pedagogue and therefore the job of the law. But we must also keep the end of verse 25 in the forefronts of our minds, which declares we are no longer under a schoolmaster. And verses 26 and 27 tell us where we are now, which I would like us to examine for our remaining minutes this morning. They say:

26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Our position is that we are now children of God. This is why I asked for **Hymn #275 I Belong to the King.**

#275 I Belong to the King

**I belong to the King; I'm a child of His love,
I shall dwell in His palace so fair,
For He tells of its bliss in yon heaven above,
And His children in splendor shall share.**

Refrain

***I belong to the King; I'm a child of His love,
And he never forsaketh His own.
He will call me some day to His palace above;
I shall dwell by His glorified throne.***

**I belong to the King, and He loves me I know,
For His mercy and kindness so free
Are unceasingly mine wheresoever I go,
And my Refuge unfailing is He.**

Refrain

**I belong to the King, and His promise is sure:
That we all shall be gathered at last
In His kingdom above, by life's waters so pure,
When this life with its trials is past.**

Refrain

But the word “children” in fact in the Greek conveys a mature son. Again Paul appeals, I believe, to ancient Roman culture in using the phrase “put on Christ”. When the father determines that the son no longer needs to be under the pedagogue, a ritual took place where the Roman youth exchanged the *toga praetexta* for the *toga virilis* and passed into the rank of citizens – a transition from boyhood to manhood. From being a minor without rights to a glorious liberty.

But at that moment, what happens to the pedagogue. What becomes of the law, when in Christ we are regenerated?

I again turn to Spurgeon on this point. He preached:

“When the young Roman, or we will say a young Hebrew, who had come under the Greek law, was under thirteen and a-half years old, this pedagogue was always beating, and cuffing, and buffeting him for his faults; but when he was a day over the time, then, according to the law, he was free from the tutelage of the pedagogue. Do you think the pedagogue struck him that morning? He knew better. He had whipped him yesterday, but now he must know his master, and render him another sort of service. The lad is come to his full age, and is under other regulations. Under the old Roman law a man was not of full age till he was twenty-five. According to that law the pedagogue might be insulting and domineering over him when he was three or four-and-twenty; but when his young master had come of age he changed his talk altogether; matters wore another phase. And so when a man becomes a believer he has come of age, and the schoolmaster's rule is over, he is no longer under his former tutors and governors, for his time of liberty appointed by the Father is come. He is not under the pedagogy of the law any longer, for Christ's work has set him entirely free there from.”

So we now find ourselves no longer under the law. Its duty is fulfilled. But does that mean that the law is now useless or to be cast away.

Martin Luther in his commentary wrote about being only temporarily under the law: *“But only for a time, that this enforced obedience, this correction and bondage, may turn to the profit of the child, that when the time cometh, he may be his father’s heir; for it is not the father’s will that his son should be always subject to the schoolmaster, and always be beaten with the rod; but that, by discipline, and instruction, he may be made meet and able to be his father’s successor.”*

Now let me ask you about a right of passage in our culture. When you graduated from high school, did you immediately forget what you learned and reject, deny, and detest all of your teachers and mentors? That is how some treat the law in Christianity. In fact, the pedagogue would often continue to be a well respected member of the household. But the problem is that some in Galatia, and some Christians even today want to be kept under the law. But the problem is not the law, the problem is being under the law. To quickly resolve this and to begin to wrap things up this morning, look at Galatians 5. *Galatians 5:13-14 ¶ For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another. 14 For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this; Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.*

But Martin Luther well addresses how the Christian continues to be benefited by the law. *“Like a good schoolmaster exerciseth his scholars in reading and writing, to the end that they may come to the knowledge of good letters and other profitable things, that afterwards they may have a delight in doing that which once they did and learned against their will.”*

“For this is the exercise of the law in the saints, namely, the continual mortification of our corrupt affections, of reason, and our own strength, and the daily renewing of our inward man, as it is said in 2 Cor 4.”

And finally to close, let me quote Spurgeon’s sermon the Stern Pedagogue one more time.

“A warfare goes on, but we are no longer children; when faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. This is not Antinomianism, for we are not against the law, but the law that once was on the stony table, and there was broken, is now written on the fleshy tablet of a renewed heart, and the Lord sweetly inclines us to keep his testimonies and observe his statutes.”

May the Lord help us to better appreciate and observe His holy testimonies through the power of His Holy Spirit.