

Galatians Chapter 3

Verse 17

1. God made a covenant with Abraham and within this covenant was the promise that Abraham would have a son, and Abraham's seed would be as the stars of heaven.
2. The Jewish legalists were implying that the law of Moses changed God's covenant agreement with Abraham, that it somehow invalidated it.
3. Paul is driving home the illustration he gave in verse 15. Once two parties have made a legally binding agreement, a third party cannot come along and change it or disannul it.
 - The law came along 430 years after God confirmed the Abrahamic covenant to Jacob (Abraham's grandson).
4. The Abrahamic covenant was an unconditional covenant. It was a covenant of grace.
 - It was not based on Abraham's **actions**.
 - It was based on Abraham's **faith. Romans 4:19-22**
5. What a wonderful example of the incredible grace that God bestows on believers today.
 - God does not abound His grace toward us on the basis of our actions.
 - God's grace is freely dispensed in response to simple faith in His Son, Jesus Christ. **Galatians 3:26; Romans 5:1-2; Ephesians 2:8-9**

Verse 18

1. God promised Abraham that he would have an heir that would come from Abraham's own bowels. **Genesis 15:4**
2. This promise was made to Abraham centuries before the covenant of the law was established. **Romans 4:13-14**
3. God gave it to Abraham by promise and nothing can invalidate it. **Romans 4:16**
4. In this church age, God has promised believers eternal life (**Romans 5:21, 6:23; Titus 1:2; 1 John 2:25, 5:11-13**) and nothing can invalidate that promise (**Romans 8:35-39**).

Verse 19

1. Paul has spent three chapters explaining how that the law cannot justify the sinner and can only bring a curse.
2. *"Wherefore then serveth the law?"* Paul knew this question would be inevitable.
3. **The law had a definite beginning.**
 - The law was added to the promises God had already made to Abraham, but it did not replace or make void those promises.
 - When God gave the law, He used angels to ordain it to the hands of a mediator, who, of course, was Moses. **Exodus 20**
4. **The law served a definite purpose.**

- Paul said that *"it was added because of transgressions."*
 - From Adam to Moses there was no **written** law, but that did not mean the absence of sin. **Romans 5:13** tells us, *"For until the law sin was in the world..."*
 - Mankind transgressed the **moral** law that God placed in their hearts (**Romans 2:14-15**), but it is the **legal**, written law that makes sin exceeding sinful and reveals sin as a transgression of God's righteousness. **Romans 7:13**
 - The law revealed God's righteousness in black and white, in clear terms that anyone could understand. *"...for by the law is the knowledge of sin."*
Romans 3:20
 - The law was given that mankind might see the true wickedness of his heart and his need of God's grace. It was designed to show man that he has morally and legally broken God's law and that he stands **guilty** before a holy and righteous God. **Romans 3:19**
 - **Romans 5:20** emphatically states, *"Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound."*
 - **Illustration:** If there were no speed limits, people would be left to follow their conscience. Some might do 50 and feel guilty of speeding; some might do 80 before they feel they are morally wrong. Once a written law is in place, one can easily determine if they are transgressing the law. They may still choose to violate the law, but they clearly know that they are guilty, and the written law makes clear their condemnation if held accountable by a police officer.
 - The Bible declares that *"...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*
Romans 3:23 - God's written law makes clear our condemnation.
5. **The law had a definite ending.**
- Paul teaches that the law was added, *"...till the seed should come to whom the promise was made."*
 - According to verse 16, that seed is Christ.
 - **John 1:17** says, *"For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."*
 - Christ's sacrificial death for sin on the cross ended the law. Christ was the only One to keep God's righteous law. He then went to the cross and paid the law's demands for every sin in the world. **2 Corinthians 5:19**
 - This is why Paul said that Christ abolished the law (**Ephesians 2:15**) and took it out of the way (**Colossians 2:14**).
 - Now eternal life is offered to all who will simply turn in faith to Christ and believe that Christ paid for their sin and rose again. **Romans 10:9**
 - In this dispensation of grace, people will be condemned to hell, not for their sin, but their rejection of Jesus Christ. They will be condemned for their refusal to believe on the Son of God, Jesus Christ.
 - Certainly, people must understand that they have sinned or they will not understand or appreciate the sacrificial death of Christ.
 - But the primary question today is not, "Have you sinned?" This can be clearly revealed in a matter of minutes using God's law.
 - The primary question is, "Have you **believed** on the Son?"

*"For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that **believeth** on him is not condemned: but he that **believeth** not is condemned already, because he hath not **believed** in the name of the only begotten Son of God."*

John 3:17-18

*"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that **believeth**."*

Romans 10:4

*"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that **believeth** that Jesus is the Son of God." **1 John 5:5***

*"He that **believeth** on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that **believeth** not God hath made him a liar; because he **believeth** not the record that God gave of his Son." **1 John 5:10***