

Galatians Chapter 3

Verse 20

1. When God gave Israel the law, He made conditional promises to them (**Exodus 19:5-8**), based on their obedience.
2. God was entering into a contractual agreement with Israel, therefore a mediator was necessary - that mediator was Moses. A mediator is a go-between. Moses stood between God and Israel.
3. But God made unconditional promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. There was no contractual agreement between Abraham and God. God alone made these promises, directly and personally to Abraham.
4. Therefore, there was no mediator necessary. This covenant rested in God, and God alone.

Verse 21-22

1. Paul anticipated the question that the Jewish legalists would be screaming - *"Is the law then against the promises of God?"*
2. Paul has proven that the promises of God (life and righteousness) are appropriated by faith. So do law and faith contradict each other? Paul exclaims, *"God forbid."*
 - God designed it so that law and faith should **complement** each other, not **contradict**.
 - They are not against each other, but they serve entirely different purposes. (**Illustration of marriage**: a husband and wife have entirely different roles and purposes, but they complement each other, not contradict.)
 - The same is true of faith and works today.
3. Paul makes it clear in this verse that the law could not give life and it could not provide righteousness to anyone.
 - If the law could give life, Christ's death would have been totally unnecessary.
Galatians 2:21
4. Then what was the purpose of the law? Verse 22 proclaims, *"But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin..."* The purpose of the law is to reveal to the sinner his guilt and condemnation that he might, in turn, flee to God's provision for his sin - Jesus Christ!
 - Weirsbe gives us a good illustration of law and faith (*Be Free* - page 80) - The law reveals our sin, just as a mirror reveals our dirty face, but you do not wash your face with the mirror. God does the cleansing in response to simple faith in the blood of Christ. **cf. Titus 3:5; Ephesians 5:26**
 - The law is extremely useful in proving to people their guilt before God and revealing their sin, but it was never meant to be a religious system, whereby one would be saved.
5. The promises of life and righteousness are not found in the law, but *"by faith of Jesus Christ."* This is a reference to Christ's fidelity and worthiness to be believed in.

6. How are the promises of life and righteousness appropriated?
 - "...that the promise... might be given *to them that believe.*"
 - They are appropriated by faith in Jesus Christ.

Verse 23

1. In context, "faith" in this verse is referring to the coming of Christ and His finished work on the cross for our sin.
2. Before Christ, the nation of Israel lived under the bondage of the law.
 - The sacrifices, ceremonies, and rituals of the law served as a reminder of a Messiah that was to come.
3. Do not misunderstand this verse and think that Old Testament saints were incapable of exercising faith. **Hebrews 11** teaches us that they were fully capable of exercising faith.
 - They simply did not have the privilege of seeing "*the faith which should afterwards be revealed.*" - This is a reference to the coming of Christ.

Verse 24

1. The law is said to have been a schoolmaster. What does Paul mean by this?
 - In the culture of that day, many times a schoolmaster was assigned to a child.
 - The schoolmaster was responsible for the education, conduct, and discipline of the child.
 - The schoolmaster would conduct the child to and from school, protecting and correcting the child, when necessary.
 - If the child was not exemplary in conduct or morals, the child would feel the schoolmaster's wrath.
 - The schoolmaster was preparing the child for maturity when he would no longer need a guardian.
2. Paul is using the analogy of the schoolmaster in regards to the law. The law was never meant to be permanent. It was to prepare Israel for the coming of Christ, their Messiah.
3. Christ fulfilled the law and then died, bearing its curse for all mankind. There is nothing left for us to do. Christ has done it all. All that is left is for us to place our faith and trust in Him.
4. The law shows us our need of a Savior and demonstrates our condemnation, that we may, in turn, flee in faith to Christ.
 - In this sense, the law brings us to Christ. It appeals to our conscience that we need a Savior.
 - Jesus used the law when teaching about Himself. **Luke 24:27, 44**
 - The law pointed people to a Messiah. **John 1:45, 5:46, 12:34**