

Heirs To The Promise (Galatians 3:15-21)

Introduction

Chapter 3 began with “You foolish Galatians.” Now he calls them “brothers and sisters.” They are children of God by faith. They are “children of Abraham.” Abraham was made right with God by faith (Genesis 15:6). We are children of God by faith.

Paul builds his case based on the trustworthiness of God and the fact that Christ is the “seed of Abraham.” God made the promise to Abraham and his “seed”, which is Christ.

1. The Promise (Covenant) with Abraham.

A. God always keeps His promise. God is trustworthy.

1. The covenant was initiated by God, not Abraham.
 - a. We want to earn what we get.

b. Lesson: If we are too proud to be in debt to God, we will never become Christians.

2. A promise or covenant is only between those who make the promise. No one can nullify a covenant unless they are part of it. The promise made to Abraham was made to Abraham and to “his seed”, who is Christ (16).

3. The promise of God to Abraham was finally realized in Christ. The promise was not altered by the law or by Moses. The law came 430 years after the covenant.

B. The Judaizers and the law.

1. Judaizers believed the law changed the promise. In the eyes of the Judaizers the law was greater than the promise. Paul says, “Not so.”

2. There was no need for a mediator since God entered into the covenant with Abraham.

2. The law is not contrary to the Promise (Purpose of the Law).

A. The law was not given to provide life (21), but rather as a guide to living. The law was given to reveal sin (19,22). It shows us our sin.

B. The law is a mirror which helps us see our dirty faces. It shows us our helpless state. It shows us our inadequacy. It reveals our need for grace. It brings us face to face with our transgressions.

1. Sin--“to miss the mark.”

2. Transgression means to go against the standards which we have accepted for ourselves. To transgress is to sin, but it is to go against the very things we say we believe.

3. The Law was given to prepare the way for Christ (23-26).

- a. Paidagogos---Child conductor, guardian, boy leader, tutor, attendant, custodian; The Paidagogos made sure the child went to school, paid attention to the teacher. He was usually a mature slave; the most trusted slave; the most intelligent slave. The Paidagogos was not the teacher, but rather he accompanied the boy to the

teacher. The Paidagogos and the boy had a special relationship. He often disciplined the boy. When the boy came of age, the Paidagogos was no longer necessary. The child would be 6 to 16 years old.

b. The law was given to be a Paidagogos for us that leads us to Christ. In Christ the Covenant was realized and in Christ the law is fulfilled.

3. The Law cannot do what the Promise can do (27-29).

A. The law cannot do for the sinner what Christ can do—make us one with God.

B. The law actually separates man from God, because it reveals our sin.

C. Baptized in Christ (only mention of baptism in Galatians) (27)

1. Faith in Jesus “baptizes us into Christ.” Water baptism identifies us with Christ and testifies that we have become a part of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-14). It is an outward picture of the inner work of the Spirit (Acts 10:44-48).

2. We are to “put on Christ; to clothe ourselves with Christ; to wear Christ; to lay aside our dirty robes / garments (Isaiah 64:6).

3. We are to be immersed into the character of Christ; take up His cross; walk in the power of the Spirit.

D. Barriers are broken down (3:28).

1. We are one in Christ.

Galatians 3:28 “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”

2. You are not made right with God by circumcision. You are made right by Jesus.

E. We are heirs to the promise / covenant.

1. The promise was made to Abraham and his seed (singular). If you are in Christ, then you too are “Abraham’s seed” spiritually speaking.

2. Believers are heirs of the spiritual blessing God promised to Abraham. Christians are enriched spiritually because of God’s promise to Abraham (Romans 8:13).

3. Chaplain Emil Kapaun...

Are you an heir to the promise God made to Abraham?

