

GALATIANS

Freedom in Christ

Session 5

October 7, 2020

Key Words in Galatians

1. LAW . . .

(1) Scripture

a. The 5 Books Moses

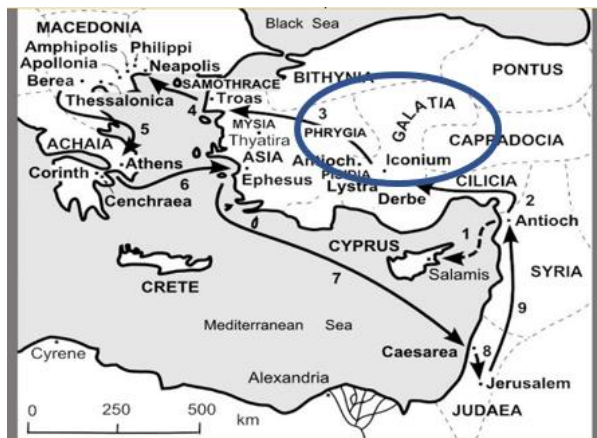
b. All the OT Books

(2) The Rules of Moses -- (“laws” = *specific precepts and ordinances*)

(3) Or--a Specific Covenant -- (*The “Law” as like the “U.S. Constitution”*)

(4) OR . . . “Works of the Law” = **Specific Rules in the Covenant with Moses**

focusing on **building and maintaining the Tabernacle** = the place where God is to be found



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SO...

Q. What's at stake in Galatians?

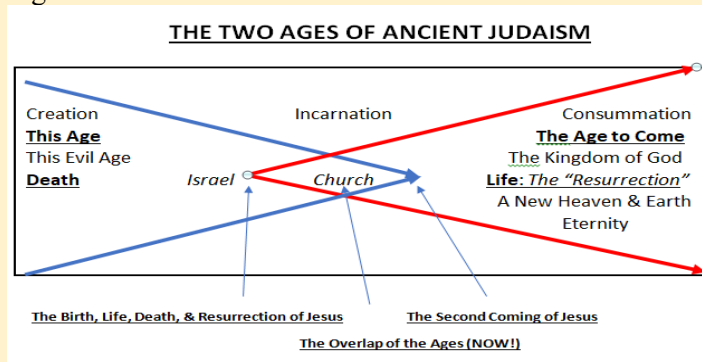
A. i. Paul's Integrity & ii. Paul's Message

II. The Theological issues (The Core of Paul's Message)

1. Whether

- The advent of Messiah Jesus is just an extension of “the old age” (*making it “a bit better”*) **X**
- or does the Messiah usher in a **whole new era** in history
(*think U.S. Revolution leads to new U.S. Constitution/Law*)? **✓**

(Remember . . . in Jewish thinking about “time” . . .



2. Whether

- The Old Testament/Law (*as Scripture*) is still authoritative – for Christians **✓**
- & If so -- what lens you read it though? – **“Faith”**

3. Whether the Old Testament Law (*as covenant/ constitution*) is still authoritative for Christians **X**
- symbolized by the *sign of that covenant* (= circumcision = “*the pledge of allegiance*”) **X**
- That is:
- Do Gentiles have to come to Christ by entering the Old Covenant established with Abraham and spelled out by Moses? **X**
 - Do Gentiles (males!) have to submit to the sign of that covenant = circumcision? **X**
Galatians 3: 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s offspring, heirs (of the kingdom of God!!) according to the promise.
4. Whether
- **the understanding & blessings of salvation** are the same in each era: **✓! X! Yes, but**
 → *Right-Relatedness / righteousness Is relative: “how close can we get?” Is hard: slavery not freedom*
 → “Life” to Paul is
 = *the-kind-of-life-that-is-derived-from-God’s-presence-and-is-lived-in-God’s-presence, in relationship with God; and-that-has-the-quality-and-quantity-of-eternity-about-it!*
BUT → **What about “physical death”?**
For Paul: Old Testament Salvation does not resolve the issue of death.
 - Genesis 2:17 . . . *the day you eat, you die*
 - Romans 6:23 . . . *the wages of sin is death*
 - Romans 7:24 . . . “*who can deliver me from this body of death?*” → **Only Christ!**
5. Whether
- **the means of salvation** (*getting back into the garden*) is the same?
 → *The Tabernacle/Temple?*
 → *The “Christ-Temple”?* ✓

III. The Personal Issue -- Paul Being a “People Pleaser” (*Changing his Core Message?*)

In Galatians 1:1-2:14

Paul Insists that the “core message” OF **Right-Relatedness**

- **coming from the faithfulness of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection,**
- **which brings together of Jews & Gentiles in one community**

is not his to change, and has not been changed

Paul insists

He is straightforward, but not arrogant.

- *not a wishy washy man-pleaser! Despite unfair pressure*
- *His message was left unchanged even by the big bosses – who saw him as being “on the same level” as them*

¹⁰they asked) . . . that we might **remember the poor** (not exactly the same request as Acts 15)

which I also was eager to do

Romans 15 ²⁵

BUT . . . Here’s the twist in the tale . . .

¹¹ **when Peter came into Antioch (where Paul was a teaching elder) according to his face I resisted him** (*that is, just in case you are still in doubt I am DEFINITELY NOT a man-pleaser! And my message is non-negotiable*) **because he stood self-condemned**

If you (Peter), though a Jew, “live”

- “Live” → “behave” → **hypocrisy?**
- OR “*have found eternal life*”? → **“the truth of the Gospel”** --

like (*in the same way as*) a Gentile (*through the faithful death of Jesus*)

and not like a Jew (*through the Covenant/Law made with Moses/Abraham*),

- how can you compel the Gentiles to live (*find eternal life*), like Jews (*through the Law of Moses*)?

(Paul now says the same thing again, but in a different way)

¹⁵ **We ourselves** (both Peter and me) who are Jews by birth and not “Gentile sinners”

¹⁶ know (→ *beyond our emotions*) that a person (*any person – whether Jew or Gentile*)

is justified/made righteous (*brought into a right relationship with God or with what God has said*)

- not by the “works of the law” (*the Covenant Law/Rules that created and gained access to God through the tabernacle temple*)
- but through (faith in -- OR) the faithfulness of Jesus Christ

. . . ¹⁷ because from “works of the law”

(the Covenant Law/Rules that created and gained access to God through the tabernacle temple)

No one (OR, literally: “not all flesh”) will be justified/made righteous (*brought into a right relationship with God or with what God has said*).

No One? OR “Not All Flesh” – “Not All Flesh” → the tabernacle/ temple as described in the Covenant Law given to Moses is not God’s tool for bringing access (resolving Genesis 2-3) for both Jew and Gentile = ‘all flesh’.



GALATIANS 3// PARALLELS // EPHESIANS 2

Ephesians 2:11-22 . .

¹¹ remember that at one time YOU ALL Gentiles by birth, called “the uncircumcision” by those who are called “the circumcision” — *a physical circumcision made in the flesh by human hands*—

¹² remember that YOU ALL were at that time

- without Christ,
- being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,
- and strangers to the covenants of promise,
- having no hope and without God in the world.

¹³ But now in Christ Jesus

- YOU ALL who once were far off
- have been “brought near” (*inside the temple*)
- by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he is our peace; (*vertically, horizontally*) in his flesh

- *he has made both groups into one*
- and has ***broken down the dividing wall***, that is, the hostility between us (*Jew & Gentile*)
- ¹⁵ ***He has abolished the (Temple) law with its commandments and ordinances,***
- that he might create in himself *one new humanity in place of the two*, thus making peace,
- ¹⁶ and might reconcile ***both*** groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.

¹⁹ So then YOU ALL are no longer strangers and aliens, but YOU ALL are

- citizens with the saints
- and also members of the household of God,
- ²⁰ built upon ***the foundation*** of the apostles and prophets,
- with ***Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone***.

²¹ In him the whole structure is joined together and grows into ***a holy temple in the Lord;***

²² in whom YOU ALL also are built TOGETHER spiritually ***into a dwelling place for God.***

¹⁹For through the law (*through what the Law says as Scripture – especially in Isaiah 52-53*)

- **I** (*as a Jew by birth*) died to the law
 - (*the Covenant Law that created and gained access to God FOR JEWS through the tabernacle temple*)
 - so that **I** might live (*the kind of life that has the quality/quantity of eternity about it and which is lived*) [to] in the presence of God.
- **I** (*as a Jew by birth, and anyone else, for that matter*) have been crucified with Christ;
 - ²⁰and it is no longer **I** (*as a Jew OR Gentile*) who live,
 - but it is Christ who lives (*both his life and death*) in **me**.
- And “now” (In this time-between the times) in the flesh – THE life I live/experience, I live by
- the faithfulness of the Son of God = who loved me = and gave himself for me.
21I do not nullify the grace (gift) of God
if there is justification/righteousness
(a right relationship with God or with what God has said, for both Jews and Gentiles)
“through the law”
 - Law as the covenant that builds the old tabernacle/ temple?—then
 - **Christ died “for nothing” (= in vain)**OR “through the law”
 - Law as Scripture? . . . then this is what Scripture says (in Isaiah 52:3, etc.)
 - **Christ died “for nothing” (= as a free gift, that cost us nothing)**

ISAIAH 52

³For thus says the Lord: **You were sold for nothing, and you shall be redeemed without money (*as a gift*).**

ISAIAH 52-53

⁵²¹⁰The Lord has bared his holy arm before the eyes of **all the nations**; and **all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God**. Lord will go before you, and the God of Israel will be your rear guard.

¹³See, **my servant shall prosper; he shall be exalted and lifted up, and shall be very high.** ¹⁴**Just as there were many who were astonished at him—so marred was his appearance,** beyond human semblance, and his form beyond that of mortals—

⁵³⁸By a perversion of justice he was taken away. Who could have imagined his future? For he was cut off from the land of the living, stricken for the transgression of my people. ⁹They made his grave with the wicked and his tomb with the rich, although he had done no violence, and there was no deceit in his mouth.

NUMBERS 21

⁷The people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned by speaking against the Lord and against you; pray to the Lord to take away the serpents from us.” So Moses prayed for the people. ⁸And the Lord said to Moses, “***Make a poisonous serpent, and set it on a pole; and everyone who is bitten shall look at it and live.***” ⁹So Moses made a serpent of bronze, and put it upon a pole; and whenever a serpent bit someone, that person would look at the serpent of bronze and live.

JOHN 3 -- ¹⁴And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, ¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life. ¹⁶“For God so loved the world

DEUTERONOMY 21:23

²²When someone is convicted of a crime punishable by death and is executed, and you hang him on a tree,²³his corpse must not remain all night upon the tree; you shall bury him that same day, for anyone hung on a tree is under God’s curse.

(Paul now moves away from the authority of Law-as-Scripture to the authority of experience)

²The only thing I want to learn from **you** (*Gentile Galatians*) is this

1. Did you receive the Spirit (gain access to the very presence of God experienced by the priests in the tabernacle/temple – even though you are neither Jewish nor priests!)

- **by doing “works of the law”** (maintaining the Covenant Law/Rules that created and gained access to God through the tabernacle temple)
- **or by believing what you heard** (in the Law as Scripture about the faithfulness of Christ)?

2. ³Are you (*Gentile Galatians*) so foolish?

- Having **started with the Spirit**, (the very presence of God experienced by the priests in the tabernacle/temple – even though you are neither Jewish nor priests!)
- are **you** now ending (going backwards) with the flesh (trying to become Jewish priests?)

⁴Did **you** experience so much for nothing? —if it really was for nothing.

*Paul now moves back to the **authority of the Law** as Scripture*

He spells out again the Biblical authority for trusting/ believing in the faithfulness of Christ

- not just in the Law-as-prophets,
- but in the Law on Genesis (one of the Five Books-of-Moses)

*This is what “the Law-as-Scripture” says in **Genesis 15:6***

⁶ **Abraham** ‘believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness’

⁷ Well, **there you have it in a nutshell:**

those who “believe” are the descendants of **Abraham**.

⁸ And the law (as scripture)

fore-seeing that God would justify the Gentiles **by faith**,

“declared-the-gospel-beforehand”

to **Abraham**, saying, (**Genesis 12:3; 17:4**)

‘All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.’

⁹ For this reason (because the Law-as-Scripture says so),

those who believe (both Jews and Gentiles) are blessed with **Abraham** who believed.

THE ONGOING PROBLEM not just of separation from God, but of THE CURSE OF DEATH

Let me remind you of one more thing

¹⁰ . . . all **who rely on the “works of the law”** (the Laws that build the tabernacle/temple in the old Covenant)

are under a curse; for it is written (in the Law, in **Deuteronomy 27:26**),

‘Cursed is everyone who **does not observe and obey all the things written in the book of the law**’

(“observe” as Scripture. 2:19, 3:15-17? Or observing all the rituals?).

¹¹ Now it is evident (from the Law-as-Scripture) that **no one** is justified/made righteous (at least with regard to the “curse” of death) before/with God in the law (as covenant?); . . . for this is what it says the “Law” in **Habb.2:4**

‘The one who is righteous will live by faith.’

¹² But the law (as covenant) does not rest on faith; on the contrary (this is what the Law actually says in Leviticus

18:5), **‘Whoever does the “works of the law” will live by them.’**

BUT what we as believers know is that

¹³ Christ redeemed **us** (both Jew and Gentile) from the curse of the law (death? Gen 2:17) by becoming a curse for **us** (in his death) — for it is written,

‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’ [Deut. 21:23] —

¹⁴ in order that in/side the new covenant temple established by Christ Jesus

- the blessing of **Abraham**
- might come to the Gentiles,

so that **we** (both *Jews and Gentiles*)

might receive the promise of the Spirit (maybe a reference to Joel 2:28 – “I will pour out my Spirit on “all flesh”) through faith (trusting in the promise).

BUT Why did God give out “his Salvation/Presence” in phases?

- Why the Old Covenant Law/Temple and only then, Christ/the New Covenant Temple?
- Why not go straight to “Phase II”?

19 Why then the law (as covenant)?

- (a) It was added because of transgressions (*to expose them, or to limit them?*)-- until (the timing was right: Gal 4:4-5) ‘the offspring’ would come -- to whom the promise had been made;
- (b) and it was ordained -- through angels by a mediator. (?)

Acts 7:38, 53

³⁸ This is the one who was in the congregation in the wilderness together with the angel who was speaking to him on Mount Sinai . . . ⁵³ you who received the law as ordained by angels, and yet did not keep it.”

Hebrews 2:2

For if the word spoken through angels proved unalterable

²⁰Now a mediator involves more than one party; but God is one. (point?)

²³ Now before “faith” came,

[DR: this is a strange choice of phrase. Clearly God’s people have had faith in some form, from the get-go. But what Paul is pointing to is a specific faith, in a specific object or covenant, not previously possible.]

Now before “faith” = the new covenant/ temple that depends on believing in the faithfulness of Jesus came
we (*Jews*) were imprisoned and guarded under the law until “faith”

= **the new covenant/temple that depends on believing in the faithfulness of Jesus would be revealed.**

²⁴Therefore the law (*as covenant*) was our (*Jews*) disciplinarian (the covenant established by the faithfulness of) until Christ came so that **we** (*Jews*) might be justified/made righteous by faith (in the covenant established by the faithfulness of Christ)



²⁵ That is, now that “faith” – **the new covenant/ temple that depends on believing in the faithfulness of Jesus has come**, **we** (*Jews*) are no longer subject to a disciplinarian,

²⁶for in (the New Temple established by) Christ Jesus

you are all (Jew and Gentile)

- children of God
- through faith in/faithfulness of Christ Jesus.

²⁷As many of **you** as were

- baptized **into** Christ (the new temple)
- have clothed yourselves with Christ.

²⁸There is no longer (a different law for different categories of people)

- There is no longer Jew or Greek,
 - There is no longer slave or free,
 - There is no longer male and female;
- for all of **you**
are one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹And if you belong to Christ,
then **you** are **Abraham**’s offspring,
→ heirs (of the kingdom of God!!)
according to the promise.