

**SUBJECT : UNDERSTANDING THE
PURPOSE OF THE LAW**

BIBLE BASIS:

Lesson Scripture:

Galatians 3:19-29; 4:4-7


BIBLE TRUTH:

We uphold the law through faith.

MEMORY VERSE: READ Galatians 4:4-6

LESSON AIM:

That you might learn to identify the blessing
and Responsibilities that come with God's
adoption of each of us.



Introduction

- Some in the churches of Galatia were spreading a false teaching. They were saying that a person is justified by works and keeping the law of Moses; that is, that a person becomes acceptable to God by subjecting himself to Christ, and also subjecting himself to the law and **do the very best he can**. Christ is important, yes, but a commitment to live by the law—a commitment to do the very best one can—is also essential in order to be saved and acceptable to God.
- The false teaching sounds good, for a person not only should, but he must, do the best he can. Actually a person should not only do the best he can in seeking God, but in everything he undertakes. However, Scripture is very clear: **man is not justified by being good and doing the best he can**. Man just cannot be good enough nor do enough good to become perfect. God is perfect; therefore, man must become perfect if he is to live with God. Gal. 3:8-10

What Is The Purpose Of The Law

- John 1:17. We are not to understand that there was no Law before Moses, or no grace before Jesus Christ, for sin is the transgression of the law, 1John 3:4 Adam's sin was the transgression of the law that God laid down as to the eating of the fruit of the Garden, and Grace was revealed. (Law Gen. 2:16-17), (Grace Gen. 3:20-24)
- Rom 2:12. The Paul speaks of those who were without law from Eden until Moses. He does not mean that they were not **accountable** for their conduct, for by their actions they showed that there was an unwritten law in their hearts that their conscience bore witness to.
- Rom 2:14-15 What Paul meant was that there was no **Written Law**, before the days of Moses. All the rites and ceremonies pointed to Christ. Now that Christ has come and fulfilled the Law,, the purpose of the law was no longer necessary. Rom. 10:4
- The Law was not given to justify men, for by the deeds of the Law shall no flesh be justified in Gods sight. The Law was given that men might know what sin is. Rom 3:20, Rom 7:7
- The Law was given to stop every man's mouth, and keep men from boasting of their own righteousness, and see themselves guilty before God. Rom 3:19

How Then Can A Person Become Acceptable To God?

- **By faith in Jesus Christ.** When a person believes in Jesus Christ, he honors God's Son, and God honors the person who honors His Son. God honors the person by doing the very thing the person believes. God counts the person righteous, credits his faith as righteousness. Saving faith does not mean *mental assent*, just believing in one's thoughts and mind that Jesus Christ is the Savior. Saving faith is *spiritual commitment*, the commitment of one's heart and life—all that one is and all that one has to Christ. 1Corn. 12:3 Faith is the presenting of ones life totally to God. Rom.12:1-2
- The believer is to be totally devoted to God . **Everything he is and has is to be dedicated to the worship and service of God.** Anything less than total commitment is short of God's glory and becomes sin in the believers life. Therefore, when discussing the believer's relationship to God anything short of total commitment sets one up for failure. Without question, the Scripture urges total devotion. John 12:24, Matt 16:24

What Was The Law For?

19 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.

One reason the law was given was to restrain the transgression of men through clearly revealing God's Holy standard; To transgress you needed a boundary set. The law set boundaries which caused man to become more aware of his sin. Without the written law there was no transgression. This written law was added only for a time period. Until the seed should come.

On Mount Sinai, the Law was given to angels; angels gave it to Moses; Moses brought it down to the people. In other words, the Law was not directly communicated. The Promise, on the other hand, was given without mediators or middlemen. It was given to Abraham directly. A promise depends on one person; a mediated agreement depends on two. The law was mediated, and this means that man was a party to it. The promise, on the other hand, is unilateral or unconditional, man is not a party to it. Man is simply the benefactor. The weakness of the law compared to the covenant of Abraham is it depends on two parties, not God alone. Ex. 20:18 ?? Gen. 12:1-3

The Promise Of God

- **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.**

- The purpose of the law was not to give life or to save a man. but to show man what sin was. The law is not an evil, opposing God's promise; it's problem lies in its inability to impart strength to those who desire to keep it - if the law *could have given life*, then it could have brought righteousness. But only faith can break us out of our bondage to sin; law can show us clearly our problem and God's standard, but it cannot give us freedom. "The law only detects; grace alone conquers sin"

If the law had been a law capable of giving *life*, "verily (in very reality, and not in the mere fancy of legalists) righteousness would have been by the law (for where life is, there righteousness, its *condition*, must also be)." But the law does not *pretend* to give life, and therefore not righteousness; so there is no opposition between the law and the promise. Righteousness can only come through the promise to Abraham.

What Is The Promise?

- **22 But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.**
- How do we know that the law does not justify or make a person acceptable to God? Because the law imprisons all men under sin. Note several significant facts.
- 1. “The Scripture” refers to the law. The law of God, or the Scripture, is conclusive: all men are lawbreakers—all men are under sin.
- 2. “Under sin” means to be shut up as a prisoner in the solitary hopeless depths or solitary confinement of a dungeon.
- The great purpose of the law is stated again: to drive men to seek the promise of Jesus Christ, that is, righteousness by faith. When men look at the law and see that they are sinners, they are driven to seek a Savior, even Jesus Christ. Man can seek and trust the righteousness which Jesus Christ has secured. When a man believes in Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ judges that man righteous, and that man becomes a “partaker of the divine nature of God” and the righteousness of God.

2 Peter 1:4, 2Corn. 5:21

The Law Reveals The Character Of God

- **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.**
- Before God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ was fully evident, we were *kept under guard by the law* - both in the sense of being bound by the law, but also held in protective custody. The law, through its revelation of God's character and its exposure of our sin, prepares us to come to Jesus - but after we have come, we no longer have to live under our schoolmaster or tutor, though we remember the behavior he has taught us.
- *Tutor* is not an accurate translation of the idea of the Greek word *paidagogos*; the *paidagogos* did not teach a child; instead, he was the child's guardian, watching over the child and his behavior.
- If someone doesn't present the law in a manner which brings people to faith in Jesus, they aren't presenting the law properly - the way Jesus Himself presented it Matthew 5:17-48

There Is No Difference

- **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.**
- Our new place in Jesus. We are now all *sons of God* in Jesus; God has become our Father and is no longer our Judge. We can enjoy a relationship with God as a loving, caring Father.
- To *put on Christ* is to see Him as your identity, that is more important than any prior identity we possessed. 2Corn 5:17, Gen. 32:27-28
- The Jews had a prayer that each man would pray every morning, thanking God that he was not a Gentile, a slave, or a woman. Paul takes each of these categories and shows them to be equal in Jesus.
- We are spiritual descendants of Abraham and heirs of God, but all according to promise, not according to law or works. Is that seed corruptible or incorruptible? I Peter 1:3-5, 23, John 12:24
- The Judaizers were saying to the Galatians, submit to the law and become circumcised, then they could become Abraham's seed, but Paul points out that we are already heirs through faith in Jesus. Act 15:1

Our Emancipator Has Come

4 But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,

The idea behind *the fullness of time* is that "the time was right"; Jesus came at just the right time in God's redemptive plan, when the world was perfectly prepared for God's work of redemption. The time was also right because the 483 years prophesied by Daniel. [Dan. 9:24-26](#)

Jesus came not only as God's Son, but also as one *born of a woman, born under law*; it is only because of both of these "genealogies" that Jesus can save us. *Born of a woman* may be a veiled reference to the Virgin Birth

- Jesus came to *redeem* (buy back) *those who were under the law*; the picture is of being purchased out of the slave market, our bondage to sin. Jesus Christ had to live under the law in order to secure the perfect righteousness of the law for man. He had to obey the law in every single precept and stand before God as the Perfect Man—the Ideal Embodiment of Righteousness. He had to secure the perfect Righteousness so that the Ideal and Perfect could stand for all men.



Adoption Is More Than Adam Had

- **5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.**

Not only are we purchased out of the slave market; we are then elevated to the place of sons and daughters of God by adoption!

Paul probably has in mind the Roman custom of adoption, where adopted sons were given absolutely equal privileges in the family and equal status as heirs.

We receive the adoption of sons; we do not *recover* it. In this sense, we gain something in Christ greater than Adam ever possessed; Adam was never adopted as a son of God in the way believers are. We err when we think of redemption as merely a restoration of what was lost with Adam; we are granted more in Christ than Adam ever had.

Adoption is a blessing which God has given in the course of salvation which is and a demonstration of His greater love and sacrifice for us. We can picture someone helping or saving someone in trouble, but not going so far as to make them a part of the family - but this is what God has done for us. Rom. 5:7-8

The Reason He Sets Us Free

- **6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.**
- He shows that we are free and set at liberty and the only thing that governs our life is the Word of God and the Spirit of Christ, who while reigning in our hearts, may teach us the true service of the Father. But this is not to serve, but rather to enjoy true liberty, as it is fitting for sons and heirs. If we have his Spirit, we are his sons, and if we are his sons, then we are free. The flesh knows no law and the Spirit needs none.
- There is a special reason why he is called the Spirit of the Son, that is, because the Holy Spirit seals up our adoption in Christ, and gives us a full assurance of it.
- It is fitting that those who are in fact sons have the Spirit of the Son in their hearts; which enable us to cry out (with Jesus) "Daddy!" to God our Father. Some think that translating the idea of *Abba* as "Daddy" is too intimate; But, "The early church fathers, who came from Antioch (where Aramaic was spoken) unanimously testify that *Abba* was the address of a small child to his father."

Are You Still A Sinner Saved By Grace?

7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ..

We are no longer a slave to the Law. We now have a Father Son relationship with God and Jesus is our Big Brother.

There are important distinctions between our sonship and Jesus' sonship: He is the *only begotten Son* -John 3:16- making Him a Son by essential nature; we are *adopted* sons and daughters of God, made children by a legal decree of God and being born again. -2Corn 6:17-18. John 3:3-7. The connection is clear between freedom and slavery; sonship and then a status as an heir; but see what we inherit as heirs - **God Himself**. We are also heirs to this world. Rom. 4:13, Heb. 1:2, 2Corn 5:17-19

The release from slavery, the sonship, the Spirit of Jesus in our hearts, and our status as heirs of God are all birthrights given to us in Jesus; these are things we should be living in and enjoying every day of our Christian life.

