



# GALATIANS

VERSE-BY-VERSE



## Session 11: Galatians 3:24-4:7

### Galatians 3:19-29 | The Purpose of the Law

- Verses 19-23 covered on session 10
- Verse 24 –
  - This is one of the most misused passages of Scripture in all the Bible, and the misuse causes a terrible dearth of understanding of the purpose of the law.
  - The depth of misunderstanding comes chiefly from reading ourselves (the church) into the pronoun **our**. In context, the pronoun is connected with the **we** of verse 23. At what time were “we the church” **kept under the law**?
  - A **schoolmaster** is a translation of παιδαγωγός [paidagogos], which is “to lead a child.” The law led the “child” Israel in the previous dispensation, keeping it together **unto Christ**, and now Israel **might be justified by faith**.
- Verse 25 –
  - How can this verse be taken except dispensationally? Israel lives in an age in which **faith is come** and thus there is no more need for a **schoolmaster**.
- Verses 26-27 –
  - Paul now switches from the first-person plural (we/us/our) which began in verse 13 to the second person plural (ye/you), which was used at Galatians 3:1 to refer to the Galatians in general.
  - All of the Galatians (both Jew and Gentile) came **by faith** and not by law. They had been **baptized into Christ** and had **put on Christ** completely apart from the law. The reference to baptism has no connection to water.
- Verse 28 –
  - This wonderful truth is in itself dispensational, as it would have been inaccurate under the covenant of the Law.
- Verse 29 –
  - It cannot be that Gentiles are heirs of the Abrahamic land promise. That would violate the nature of the promise itself.
  - However, being *in Christ* both Jews and Gentiles are **Abraham’s seed** and are thus **heirs according to the promise** and not according to the Law.
  - Paul’s purpose has not been to describe the identity of those who inherit the land, but rather to identify the manner in which God’s gift is given today, which is *by promise* and not *by works*.

### Galatians 4:1-7 | Sons of God

- Verses 1-2 –
  - Paul now speaks *illustratively*, not referring to the heir of the previous verses, but of an heir in general.
  - His thought is foundational to the argument that both Jews and Gentiles are now free from the law. The principle: an heir, while a child, **is under tutors and governors** and not able to exercise the freedoms of his inheritance, **though he be lord of all**.

- Verse 3 –
  - Paul remains consistent in his use of pronouns, with *you/ye* being the Galatians (inclusive of Jews and Gentiles) and *we/us/our* being the Jewish nation.
    - Here, speaking of the Jewish nation, speaks of a time in which the Jews **were in bondage under the elements of the world.**
    - In Greek, Paul’s word choice gives emphasis to the **we** because he is making a transition from second person plural to the first-person plural.
    - For users of the *Companion Bible*, note the “**we**” script, which notes emphasized pronouns”
  - The Jewish nation as **in bondage**, a reference to verse 1 in which the heir **differeth nothing from a servant.**
    - The word **bondage** translates from δουλος [doulos], the same root word as **servant.**
    - The bondage was to **the elements of the world**, not a reference to nature, but *rudimentary principles.*
- Verse 4 –
  - The **fulness of the time** is very specific wording that should cause the student of the Word to search the scriptures to see what **the time** is.
  - Clearly the work of Jesus was on a time schedule that was set by the Father. Daniel 9:24-27 is the clearest reference, but there are many others.
  - At the time pre-arranged, **God sent forth his Son.** One cannot be **sent forth** unless they are pre-existent. Being already in existence, then the Son was **made of a woman** and **made under the law.**
    - The word **made** implies a pre-existence, while *born* does not.
    - A comparison can be made with Galatians 3:13 and John 1:14.
- Verse 5 –
  - Here Paul has an interesting switch of pronouns, switching to the third-person plural then immediately back to the second-person plural.
    - Why **them** and **we**? The switch shows the theological precision of the text.
    - **Them** is reference to the Jewish nation that WAS under the law 25 years earlier, at the time of the crucifixion.
    - **We** is the Jewish nation that at that time had potential to receive **the adoption as sons.**
    - This **adoption** is the “graduation to adulthood” in which the son gains the full rights of the inheritance. The Greek υιοθεσία [hiouthesia] is “to place sonship.”
  - Has the “sonship” of the Jewish nation come?
    - Since the *salvation* of the nation has not come, we want to say that the *sonship* of the nation has not come. However, the *sonship* (i.e.: adoption) *has come.*
    - Paul refers to **waiting for the adoption** in Romans 8:23, but in a bodily context, not a spiritual context.
    - In Romans 9:4 speaks of **the adoption** in the present.
    - The *sonship* of the Jewish nation has been given: they now have the full rights and responsibilities as the heir of the Kingdom. Sonship does not equate to salvation, nor does it guarantee that the inheritance will be managed well (consider the prodigal son).

- Christ came **To redeem them that were under the law** (Israel) and has done that.
  - The redemption has been paid, and thus the nation has been redeemed. Because of this, the Levitical system, the Passover, and the tithe are all meaningless, for each of these was a token of the redemption price. Now that the full price has been paid, the nation is redeemed.
  - It is then of utmost importance that we recognize that *redeemed* does not mean *saved*. The price has been paid and the purchase completed, but individuals are free to reject the gift. Only those who, by faith, receive the gift are *saved*.
- Verse 6 –
  - Now Paul makes another switch from **we** to **ye**, speaking of the Galatian believers (i.e., the church).
  - The church is blessed to be brought into this relationship *by grace through faith* and now can claim to be **sons**. And because of this, **the Spirit of his Son** has been given to the believer, and they cry out **Abba, Father**.
- Verse 7 –
  - Now Paul makes *yet another* pronoun switch! This time Paul uses the first-person singular, which he has only used twice previously, both times in discussion with Peter (Gal. 2:14).
  - Since it is doubtful that this is a direct reference to Peter, it makes more sense to see this as a manner of speaking directly to the individual son rather than the **sons** (plural) of verse 6.