

## Sermon Discussion

### 22 May 2022

Read Galatians 3:15-25

#### Dig Deeper

Even if Paul's opponents admitted that Abraham was justified by faith, those Judaizers might have argued that the Law, coming at a later time, entirely changed the basis for achieving salvation. To refute this, Paul declared that just as a properly executed Roman **covenant** (or will) cannot arbitrarily be **set aside** or changed, so the promises of God are immutable.

The Hebrew word for "**seed**" or "offspring" (v. 16) is a *collective singular* that can refer either to one descendant or many descendants. An English collective singular, for example, is "sheep" that can refer to one sheep or many sheep. Both "seed" and "offspring" are also collective singulars in English. Paul explained that the seed God had in mind in Genesis 13:15 and 17:8 was the one descendant, Christ.

In v. 17, the **430 years** probably began with God's reiterating the promises to Jacob at Beersheba as he left Canaan to settle in Egypt (in 1875 B.C.; *Genesis 46:2-4*). They probably ended with the giving of the Mosaic Law (in 1446 B.C.; *Exodus 19*).

Paul asks do the Law and the promises **contradict each other** (v.21-22)? Never! God designed them for two different purposes. The purpose of the Law was never to provide justification. It served as a mirror to show people their sinfulness and that they are the slaves of sin. When they realize they cannot save themselves, they will be open to receiving salvation as a gift by faith.

The Law is described as a **guardian** or a "tutor" (NASB). The word *paidagōgos* is difficult to render into English since there is no exact parallel to this position in modern society. One suggestion is "a strict governess." The pedagogue here was not a "schoolmaster" (KJV) but a slave to whom a son was committed from age six or seven to puberty. These slaves were severe disciplinarians and were charged with guarding the children from the evils of society and giving them moral training.

1. The Christians in Galatia were being told to keep the Law in order to gain life, righteousness, and favour from God. What rules and regulations have Christians added to the gospel? What problems has this caused?

2. Read verses 19-24. If the law was insufficient to bring about salvation, there must be no need for it in the first place—right? Yet, that's not what Paul says. What are some of the reasons he gives for the purpose of the law?
  
3. In v. 24 Paul describes the Law as our guardian to lead us to Christ. Explain why using the Law is necessary when trying to lead others to faith in Jesus Christ.
  
4. Paul makes a really big deal about belonging to Christ, the Seed of Abraham, and being in Him. Why are these truths so important? What do we now possess since we are in Christ?

### **Application & Prayer**

Maybe you have never viewed the OT Law in the way that has been described in Galatians 3. Let's look at it from God's perspective. You were probably told as a child not to play in the street. That boundary seemed restrictive and spoiled your fun, but in reality, you were being protected from harm.

Look at each of the ten commandments and see if you can identify the harm your Heavenly Father is using it to protect you from.