

Freedom! The Purpose of the Law

"We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified." - Galatians 2:15,16

Lessons We Learn

1. Christians are meant to enjoy freedom.
2. Our freedom is to be expressed properly.

Think about this . . .

What "chains" or laws are you still living with that ought to be removed or forgotten.

The Story Line of Galatians

Many Jews had moved to the area of Galatia and met Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Apostle Paul.

False teachers taught these Jews that as Christians, they still needed to follow the law.

Paul, furious at this teaching, helps these new converts understand how to be unchained and enjoy their freedom.

Paul's Repetition in Galatians 2:15-16

- Three times he refers to "observing the law" and its futility.
- Three times he mentions the word "justified."
- Three times he encourages faith in Jesus Christ.

Paul Teaches Us...

The law can't save us! (or justify us)

- It never could.
"We who are Jews by birth and not 'Gentile sinners' know..." - Galatians 2:15,16
- It doesn't now.
"So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law..." - Galatians 2:16
- It never will.
"...because by observing the law no one will be justified." - Galatians 2:16

So, What Then, Is the Purpose of the Law?

"What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one.

Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.

Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law." - Galatians 3:19-25

There Are Very Good Purposes for the Law!

1. It gives us a standard to compare ourselves against.

What (or whom) do you use for comparison?

2. It provides for us a proof of the Messiah.

"Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don't you believe me?" - John 8:46

"God made Him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." - 2 Corinthians 5:21

"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin." - Hebrews 4:15

"...but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect." - 1 Peter 1:19

3. It helped us understand life as a prisoner.

"Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed." - Galatians 3:23

4. It leads us to Jesus who has the only key to our chains.

"So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ..." - Galatians 3:24

Ask Yourself . . .

Am I still measuring others based on my understanding of the law? Am I being unfair?

Our Application

1. Are you still trying to earn your salvation by following law? Are you trying to earn God's love?
2. Do you understand that your ONLY hope is in Jesus Christ?

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'" - John 15:6

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