

Date: 9 April 2023

Scripture Passage: Galatians 3:19-25

Title: The True Purpose Of The Law (Gal. 3:15-25)

Introduction

- Since the Fall, God has revealed the way of salvation by way of covenants. Gen 3:15 was the first gospel to Adam and Eve. Adam was saved by having faith in the coming seed.
- There is only one way of salvation (15-18). The way of faith/promise was given as a covenant between God and Abraham (16). The covenant was confirmed by God, fulfilled in Christ (16-17).

1. What purpose then does the law serve (19-20)?

- The law is like a two way mirror. When God reveals his law, He reveals himself. God didn't have to look at some external objective standard of righteousness in order to establish the law. He just needed to look within at his own character, at his perfect nature. God is the standard of good, perfect, and holy. Because the law is perfectly, because there aren't any inequities and imperfections found in the character of God. The Law of God is the revelation of God. It's the mirror by which we look at and see who God is.
- The law reveals who we are. The law reveals not only who God is but who we are. The law was added because of transgressions. The law was added to curb sins, not to replace the way of salvation. We look in the mirror of the law, we see our sin and our imperfection clearly. We have always known the law inwardly in our hearts. Through our consciences. And we know when we have sinned. And that is the reason why everybody dies. Because no one is able to keep the law perfectly. God added the law to make it absolutely clear that there is only one way of salvation. God in his mercy give the law to limit the adverse effects of sins. Otherwise we would be worse than what we are. The law is given to prevent us from becoming worse. God gave the law to the Nation of Israel to prevent them from getting worse. It was not to replace the way of salvation. And the reason was that God wanted to preserve the truth, namely that salvation is going to be from that one seed, Jesus Christ.
- God wanted truth preserved, faith focused on coming Seed. Angels involved in giving of law, and mediator, also viz, Moses (cf. Ex. 20:18). The law of was given to the nation of Israel with Moses as the mediator, a human mediator. He spoke on behalf of God to the Nation of Israel. Jesus Christ is now the mediator for His people. He sits at the right hand of God interceding for us.
- God unilaterally sets terms of covenant, unlike human covenant (20). The Human covenant is used only as an illustration to bring out the point that, once confirmed, you cannot cancel it. That is all. But this is not a human covenant we are talking about. It is the covenant initiated by God. The terms and conditions. Are set by God. So although two parties are involved in the giving of the law with a human mediator, but in so far as the covenant was concerned, God initiated it, God came to Abraham. God set the terms and Abraham had to receive it to obey. And God being good and being wise, his terms and conditions are all good and to his glory. We know it is never wrong. It will be as he wished. And true enough, when the savior came, Jesus Christ came, God really fulfilled his promise to Abraham. Those who have faith in Christ, they come to be inheritors of the promised salvation given to Abraham.

2. Is the law then against the promises of God (21-22)?

- No. The law cannot save, for no law provides the righteousness needed to stand before God (21). The law reveals that we are captured in sin. We're prisoners to our own transgressions. Now, before we had faith, we were held captive under the law. We were imprisoned until we had faith. So then the law was our guardian until Christ came. That we might be justified by faith.
- The law, in Scripture, reveals all in bondage to sin so that the promised salvation may be given to those who believe in Christ will be counted as righteous. None righteous (Rom 3:9-10), including Gentiles (Rom 2:14-15). We need righteousness to stand before God, and that righteousness we need comes from Jesus Christ. The law is unable to provide any righteousness. So therefore you cannot rely on keeping the law to save yourself. The law is not against the promises of God. The law rather drives us to have faith in Christ, otherwise we cannot be saved. So the law is not against promises. Instead, the law is an aid used by God to drive us to trust in Christ that we might have the righteousness to stand before God.

- The law an administration of the covenant of grace, wrongly used by Jews as covenant of works. Since the Fall, covenant of works cannot save. The period when Moses received the law and gave it to Israel, that period was an administration of the Covenant of Grace. It is not an administration of the Covenant of Works as claimed by our Pedo Baptist Brethren. The Jews went wrong. By failing to see the true purpose of the law, the law was to expose their sin, their lack of righteousness, and the need to turn to the savior who was promised to Abraham.

3. What is the relationship between the law and gospel (23-25)?

- In the history of redemption, the law kept the Jews under guard, condemning them as guilty, until Jesus Christ arrived on the scene and is revealed as the Savior. Similarly, it can be said that in every believer's experience, the law convicts him of sin until he comes to faith in Christ (Rom. 7:7). The law cannot save us. But the law teaches us certain things, such as what we have seen already in the case of the apostle Paul in Romans Chapter 7, Paul says he would not have known sin if not for the law. But the law made him realize he was a covetous person. He was very ambitious, and along the way he was convicted of his sin. He thought he had kept the law so well. But as he understood the requirements of the law, he was convicted of his sin. So the law performs that purpose. Of teaching us of correcting us and of driving us to that one way of salvation, namely to trust in Christ.
- The law is like a tutor/guradian/taskmaster. Holding us captive under its power. Martin Luther understood the purpose of the law was to drive him to Christ, who alone could satisfy the demands of the law and give the promise of salvation that comes by faith. A law is given as a restraint upon people to curb their natural inclinations to sin. You've heard the expression. The law provides us restraint, so that we aren't as unruly as we would.
- What value is the law to the Christians? Since the law doesn't say and we're no longer underneath the law being held captive by it? How important it is? The answer to that question I think is found earlier in Scripture. If we can go to Psalm 119:97. Oh, how I love your law. If you love me, keep my commandments. If you love me, love my law. The psalmist understood that the psalmist wasn't praising the law as a way to salvation. He knew better than that.
- Psalm 1. Blessed is the man who walketh not among the ungodly stand in the way of sinners, or sits in the seat of the scornful. But what but his delight. Is in the law of the Lord, and in that law does he meditate day and night. Why? Because the psalmist love God. And he said, God, I want to please you. And in the law, I discover what is pleasing to you. That's why I love it. Not because it can save me, not because I'm trying to rest on my good words. I've already been saved. But I'm a grateful person. For the rest of my days, want to do everything that I possibly can to please my savior.

Summary and Application

- Law kept for sanctification, not justification (5:22). Justification must not be confused with sanctification. Justification is God declaring us no more guilty, but treats us as righteous? That has to do with our salvation. We become a Christian the moment. We are justified by God through faith in Jesus Christ. Sanctification has to do with the process of growing holier and holier in our Christian life, and although we will never be perfect in this world, nevertheless true Christians will want to live a righteous life, a life of obedience to God's law. We don't kick the law as a means of salvation. We keep the law because we are already safe by grace through faith. In Jesus Christ alone.
- Do not look upon the law as bad. Reveals sins, convicts of guilt, drives one to Christ. Are you saved? Psalm 19:7-11. How sweet are your words to my taste? Sweeter than honey to my mouth. And through your precepts, I get understanding. Your word is a lamp unto my feet, a light to my path. Your law so clearly and sweetly reveals what it means to please you. I don't have to fumble around and grope in the dark to try to figure out what I should do as a Christian, how I should live. If I meditate on the principles that you have revealed to us, then I know what you want me to do. Even though the law cannot save us, we don't despise it because it functions as a revelation to that which is pleasing to the Lord. Do you want to please Christ? Obey His law. Meditate on it every day.
- Law keeping cannot save. Faith in Christ alone saves. Preach law, but not exclusively. Preach the law as it shows to us where we have failed, we are brought to this sense of guilt. And the realization that we have offended God. When you're convicted of your sin, then you will be driven to see Christ as the solution to your need. Gospel preaching involves the preaching of the law, the. You must preach the law, but don't be stuck at

the law because that is not the gospel. Gospel preaching that is complete involves the law. You must preach the law and make people come to see why they need Jesus Christ, why they need to trust in his death to be safe. The law does not in any way cancel the one way of salvation, which is by faith in Jesus Christ. Abraham believe in the promise of God. And that promise involved faith in the coming seed Jesus Christ. So today, when we have faith in Christ, we share the same faith as Abraham. We are his spiritual children. We are his descendants. We are heirs. We receive the promise blessing of salvation that was given to us. So Abraham is, as it were, our spiritual father. We are his spiritual children. Are you saved? Have you repented of your sins? Have you trusted in Jesus Christ? Your faith in Christ and him crucified alone. Or are you still trusting in your effort or trusting in your various ways of salvation? Be clear that the only way of salvation is by faith in Christ alone, not by your works. May God deal graciously with us all.