

The Circumcision Wars VI Galatians 3

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Galatians is the most difficult book of the Apostle Paul. I think it's very important and realize that we can actually understand it by putting all of the things together that we have learned. I think that one of the biggest mistakes that they make in the Protestant world is that they start in Galatians 2 & 3.

Last time we went through Gal. 2 and reviewed some things again, so I want to review a little bit of this that we have in Gal. 3

Galatians 3:1: "O foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you *into* not obeying the Truth..." That's a very interesting thing—isn't it? The Truth has to be obeyed! What is Truth?

- Your Word is Truth!
- the sacrifice of Christ
- the way of forgiveness of sin through His sacrifice and shed blood

"...before whose eyes Jesus Christ, crucified, was set forth in a written public proclamation?" (v 1). The King James says, "...has been evidently set forth, crucified among you?"

In the *Interlinear*, the first word of the third line is a hyphenated word that begins at the end of the second line: 'proegraphie.' When I translated that, I looked at that and it about blew me away, because 'graphie' means *written*.

I got out the Lexicons and looked up the word and sure enough it is a *written proclamation*. In the Greek the word is 'proegraphie' meaning that it was written. This is evidence that they had at least the book of Matthew there, so that they would understand the Truth about Christ, His crucifixion—it says that there was a *written proclamation among you about Christ crucified*. This gives us evidence that the book of Matthew was already written and being circulated.

How do we know this really means *written*? 2-Timothy 3:15 "And that from a child you have known the Holy Writings..." The Greek there is *the sacred letters*. The word for letters is 'grammata.' We have: 'gra'; 'graphie' and 'grammata'—letters, or that which is written—called Holy Scriptures.

"...which are able to make you wise unto salvation through faith, which *is* in Christ Jesus. All Scripture..." (vs 15-16). The word for Scripture is identical to the first word on the third line of the *Interlinear*, Gal. 3:1, 'graphie.' This cannot mean by

oral teaching; this cannot be passing on by tradition; this has to mean that it was written. This becomes a very important thing when we come to Gal. 3, to understand that they had the Gospel written in front of them.

That's why Paul says, Galatians 3:1: "O foolish Galatians... [which really means senseless] ... who has bewitched [deceive] you..." This is exactly what happens. Here we have all of the Word of God, that is great and tremendous blessing that we can have it, plus peace, plus the ability to study, plus all of the Bible helps, all of the things that we have now. Yet, people get turned off from studying the Bible. Satan comes along and says, 'Okay now, they have the Bible, now let me bring some misinterpretations and let me take advantage of some mistranslations and we'll bring the wrong understanding.'

If you have the right book, but the wrong understanding, then it really doesn't matter that you have the right book as long as you can be confused into having the wrong understanding. That is what happened here.

Verse 2: "This only I desire to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit of God by works of law, or by *the* hearing of faith?"

Verse 2 (*Int*): "This only I wish to learn from you, by works of law the Spirit receive ye, or by report of faith?"

Verse 2 (*KJV*): "This only would I learn of you, received you the Spirit by **the** works of **the** law, or by the hearing of faith?" When you read that that way, what we really find is this: They inserted two definite articles, one before *works* and one before *law*. There is *no definite article in the Greek* for either one.

This becomes a mistranslation, which then can become a misunderstood verse, because you think it's talking about all the Law. But it's not! Works of law apply two ways:

1. By doing animal sacrifices and following the sacrificial laws. That is a *work of law!*
2. By following the code of Jewish law to do those things that the Jews added by traditional observation. That is a *work of law!*

Such as we saw in Gal. 2 in separating from the Gentiles. That is a Judaism *work of law*. They have

many other laws that they have added, which they say makes them in 'right standing before God.' Paul is saying, 'Wait a minute here. How did you receive the Spirit? By works of law?'

- How did you receive the Spirit? *Repentance from the heart, and belief!*
- When you started keeping the Sabbath, did you receive the Holy Spirit? *No!*
- When you decided to get your life squared around and start keeping the commandments of God, did you receive the Holy Spirit? *No!*

You had to repent and be baptized and receive the laying on of hands for the Holy Spirit. That is not a work of any law. That is an operation of part of the Truth of the New Testament, "...or by the hearing of faith?"

Verse 3: "Are you so foolish?..." Brainless; we have a lot of brainless people today.

I had one guy call and he was in Carson City and it was the first time I ever heard from him. The first thing he said, 'Do you believe that Eve had sex with Satan?' *No, I don't! If you believe that, this conversation has ended!* He said, 'I believe it.' *This conversation has ended!*

I said to myself: nothing like a 3,000-year-old doctrine being rehashed. I should have told him to 'get a life.' This is what a lot of people are doing today—they began with repentance, they began with baptism, they began with the laying on of hands, they began with receiving the Holy Spirit—and now they want to be perfected in the flesh.

In Paul's case here, being perfected in the flesh means that's the third stage of Judaism in making a proselyte, that in order to become a full-fledged Jew they had to be circumcised in the flesh. This is what he's talking about here.

Today it can apply to physical things. We have some out there—there's a man in Florida that says 'unless you use the sacred names, unless you are circumcised, you cannot be saved.' That's a heavy load. Here are grown men, 30, 40, 50, 60 getting circumcised. They can read in the New Testament that no, you don't have to be. That's a *work of law* to try and compel God to do something for you.

Listen, the only way God will do anything for you—and you can never compel Him anyway—is if you humbly beseech Him and believe Him, ask Him, and trust Him in faith. It's not a work of law: 'O God, if I keep the Sabbath perfectly the rest of my life, will you do this, that and the other thing? *No!* God is not in the bargaining business. 'Unless

you believe Me, and believe in Jesus Christ, and believe My Word, if you kept the Sabbath as perfect as Job did, it's not going to get you one merit badge.'

"...Having begun in *the Spirit*, are you now being perfected in *the flesh*?" (v 3). We have people who say, from the point of view of Judaism, that you have to have a yamaka, prayer shawl, tassels, phylacteries where you write out the Ten Commandments and put them in this little wrist compartment like the Jews have. *That doesn't change the heart!*

Verse 4: "Have you suffered so many things in vain..." Look at all the things we've gone through in the Church of God. Have a lot of them suffered in vain? *Apparently!*

"...if indeed it *has been* in vain? Therefore, *consider this: He Who is supplying...* [present tense verb] *...the Spirit to you...*" (vs 4-5)—that is by faith into faith. Remember how the Apostle Paul was writing and in 2-Timothy he said, 'Stir up the Spirit that is in by the laying on of my hands.' He's reminding him that the Spirit is continually given. We need to 'stir it up.' God is supplying the Spirit to us constantly.

Romans 1:16: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ because it is *the power of God* unto salvation to everyone who believes—both to *the Jew* first, and to *the Greek*. For therein... [in the Gospel] *...the righteousness of God is revealed...* [the right standing with God through Christ; that's precisely what he's talking about in the book of Galatians] *...from faith unto faith...*" (vs 16-17). That's how God is supplying it.

We see the same operation in Romans 5:5: "And the hope of God never makes us ashamed because the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, which has been given to us."

That's why it is, Galatians 3:5: "...He Who is supplying the Spirit to you..." and you constantly are receiving of it; you have the begetting of the Holy Spirit, that is true, but you constantly need to be refreshed with the Spirit of God constantly working in you. How does that come? *Through prayer, through study, through yielding to God*, and He is supplying the Spirit to you.

"...and Who is working deeds of power among you..." A magical formula is this: they use special words and then something happens. How does God work miracles? *or* "...working deeds of power..."?

- By faith!

- By prayer!
- By belief!

There is no formula! When we understand this, we know that the Catholic doctrine of the priest commanding Christ to put His presence in the bread and wine *cannot be true*. They claim that is a special miracle accomplished by the words that the priest says. It is not so!

“...*is He doing it by works of law or by the hearing of faith? It is exactly as it is written: ‘Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him for righteousness’*” (vs 5-6). We’ve gone through that in Gen. 15. What work did Abraham have to do? God gave him the promises; He says ‘of your own bowels you’re going to have a son.’ God took him out and showed him the stars of heaven and says to ‘number them if you can and so shall your seed be.’ What work did he have to do? *He couldn’t! He had no work to do!*

Could he count them? *No! It’s an impossible task!* But not for God; He knows them all by name and by number. That’s why it is belief! Abraham believed! We have the whole thing concerning the covenant sacrifice that was given. I’ve got that fully explained in *The Christian Passover* book and also *A Harmony of the Gospels*. When he believed what was his circumcision condition? *Uncircumcised!*

Verse 7: “Because of this, *you should* understand that those who *are* of faith are the *true* sons of Abraham.”

Verse 29: “And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to *the* promise.”

- Why is this important?
- What did the Jews claim of themselves?
- *That they were of the seed of Abraham!*

Therefore, unless you became a Jew, and unless you became circumcised, you could not have salvation. That’s what’s going on here in the circumcision wars. This is why Paul is emphasizing to the Gentiles there that if you believe in Christ—as Abraham believed in God and the promises and the covenant that He gave—then you are the true sons of Abraham, because you’re the spiritual sons of Abraham, you are not the physical sons of Abraham.

What did Jesus say to the physical sons of Abraham? *If you will obey the Truth then you shall be free!* (John 4). If you understand the Truth you shall be free of sin, free of bondage. They said, ‘We have never been in bondage, we are Abraham’s seed.’ Jesus said, ‘I know you’re Abraham’s seed, but you don’t do the works of Abraham.’ Paul is

building on that by saying, ‘You are the sons of Abraham because you believe and obey God’; ‘obeying the Truth’ (v 1).

Verse 8: “Now, *in* the Scriptures, God, seeing in advance that He would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, ‘In you shall all the nations be blessed.’ *It is* for this reason that those who are of faith are being blessed with the believing Abraham. **For as many as are *relying on works of law are under a curse***, because it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them’” (vs 8-10).

Here’s where more confusion comes, and this is why Protestants say that anyone who keeps the commandments is under a curse; v 10 (*KJV*): “For as many as are of **the** works of **the** law...”—the definite article is not there in the Greek. So, it should be *works of law* just like I have it translated.

There are two things we need to understand. First let’s ask: Is the Law a curse? *No!* Protestants think so. God says, ‘No!’ What is the curse of the Law? *It doesn’t say ‘the law is a curse.’* If it did, that would be clear. But it is ‘the curse of the Law.’ What is the ‘curse of the Law’? *The curse of the Law is sin!*

Deuteronomy 28:1: “And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God to observe *and* to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God” (vs 1-2). The He lists all the blessings.

We read that the *curse of the Law* is the result of transgression, of not doing the Law. Why are those under *works of law* under a curse?

1. Transgression

The first meaning of *curse of the Law* is transgression, v 15: “And it shall come to pass, if you will not hearken to the voice of the LORD your God to observe and to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you.” When they didn’t keep the commandments of God, they suffered from the *curse of the Law*.

What happens if you are partial in your obedience? *You’re also under a curse*, because it says:

Galatians 3:10: “...‘Cursed *is* everyone who

does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them.” This is why the writings of the Apostle Paul are hard to understand. If you can understand this, you’re understanding things that are very difficult to understand, and you’re understanding things that very few people really understand.

Deuteronomy 27:26—that’s where Gal. 3:10 is quoted from: “Cursed *is* he who does not confirm *all* the words of this law to do them. And all the people shall say, ‘Amen.’”

2. Partial obedience

You’re not doing everything that was required under the covenant that God gave to Israel.

3. Partial obedience and adding traditions of Judaism

Like out of the code of Jewish law. When we come to the New Testament and we come to what Jesus gave us to do:

- Do we do all things written in the book of the Law? *NO!*
- Does that mean we reject the commandments of God? *NO!*

That’s why you have go back to what Jesus taught in Matt. 5-7 where He magnified the Law and made it honorable. But, under the Old Covenant with Israel, they had to have the sacrificial offerings—didn’t they? They had to go to the temple—didn’t they?

What did Jesus show? *That we’re to keep the Ten Commandments!* How? *With a greater and higher spiritual standard!* That did not do away with the Law. That doesn’t mean that if we do not give the animal sacrifices we are under a curse, because we have a *higher sacrifice* being Jesus Christ. We do not have to go to the temple because we have a greater temple in heaven above.

Now then, here’s something most people misunderstand: the administration of death {see sermon series: Refuting Sunday-Keeping} The administration of death comes from Gen. 9, that after the Flood God gave man the authority to judge other men who have shed the blood of man, and he is to execute him. That’s the administration of death.

All sovereign nations have the administration of death. God gave it to them. When God called out Israel, it became a sovereign nation with the theological laws and civil laws. When anyone committed murder they were to take the person and execute them, because Israel had, as a sovereign nation, the authority to judge and to execute. That is the administration of death.

The Church is a completely different organization altogether. The Church is not a sovereign nation. The Church consists of called out ones in many, many nations. Therefore, God did not give to the Church the administration of death. He will not have His Church, in different countries, superceding the command that He gave to those countries, to execute the death penalty, the administration of death. It would be illegal to do so in those nations if the Church took upon itself to bring the death penalty. Not only would it be against what God has commanded, it would be against the law of the nation.

For example: If here in the United States you had someone that did a crime—i.e. witchcraft—then you burn them at the stake. The Old Testament says that you ‘burn a witch.’ But God never gave that to the Church.

Therefore, please understand, all the Inquisition and all of those things done by the Catholic Church and the Protestants to bring about the administration of death were contrary to the Law of God in the New Testament. With the crucifixion of Christ it was very similar to that. The Jews then being subject to the occupying powers could not execute the death penalty themselves.

If you want to follow the Old Covenant, and this is where the problem comes in, you have to do everything written in the book of the Law; otherwise you bring a curse. Jesus knew that now we are going to have a different administration of the Law.

- All the temple rituals have been superceded by Christ!
- All sacrifices have been superceded by Christ!
- All circumcision in the flesh has been superceded by the circumcision of the heart!
- All administration of death has been removed from the Church; we have the administration of the spirit!

The greatest penalty that any congregation can do is disfellowshipment.

Therefore, Christ dying for all the sins and ending the Old Covenant, we do not have the *curse of the Law* brought upon us in not continuing everything written in the book of the Law. That’s why it is a very difficult thing for the Protestants to really grasp that, because they think this does away with all commandment and law-keeping. *NO!* It is the administration on how it is done.

That’s how we are redeemed from the curse of the Law!

Compared to that, here's the difference, Galatians 3:11: "Therefore, *it is* evident that no one is being justified before God by *means of* law; because *it is written*, 'The just shall live by faith.'"

In that faith and having been justified, you keep the commandments of God according to the way that Jesus Christ expounded them, and the way the apostle amplified them. That's how we keep the commandments of God today.

Verse 12: "Now then, the Law is not based on faith..." Why is the Law not based on faith? *Because it's written out! There's no faith involved!* All you have to do is read it. The New Testament is different. You have to read it and *believe* it!

"...but, 'The man who practices these things shall live in them'" (v 12). What he's saying is that 'if you Galatians want to go back and do Judaism,

- you've got to be involved in sacrifices
- you've got to be involved in circumcision
- you've got to be involved in the traditions of the Judaism.

After all, the thing that provoked this is was when Peter and those from James separated themselves from the Gentiles during the eating on one of the Feast days.

Verse 13: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law... [He has not redeemed us from law-keeping; He's redeemed us from law-breaking—sin—which is a curse.] ...having become a curse for us (for it is written, 'Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree')." That's what it says there in the Old Testament.

Verse 14: "In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, *and* that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." The way that they became a member of Israel, or the community of the Jews, later was through *circumcision* and *works of law*. Now we receive the spirit, which is greater, through faith because we believe.

A very important section that we need to go through again to really understand starts with v 15: "Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man's covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it." Why does God deal in covenant? *Because God deals in truth!* Men can deal in agreements; men can even deal in covenants, but today men deal in agreements.

In law today, the words do not mean what they say: All does not mean *all*. But these 'unclear' words, which you have just read, clearly spell out what you need to do. However, you have to have a

second agreement to really tell you what it really means. Therefore, if anyone is going to do anything in that kind of law, you go ahead and sign it, but you put at the end of it: 'I have signed this, but just like the words that you say mean nothing, my signature means nothing.'

Covenant is different! It is absolute! That's why God deals in covenant, because He is absolute! This becomes very important in understanding Gal. 3:19.

Verse 15: "Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man's covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it." You don't change it; a covenant must stay the way that it has been ratified; you cannot change it. God made the covenant with Abraham with two parts: *physical* seed and *spiritual* seed.

When He made the covenant with Israel, He could not add to that covenant. Therefore, v 19 is also difficult to understand because of a mistranslation. We will see that v 19 cannot be translated the way the *KJV* does, because it's contradiction within the space of four verses.

Verse 15 (*KJV*): "Brethren, I speak after the manner of men; though it be but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannuls, or adds thereto."

Verse 19 (*KJV*): "Wherefore then serves the law? It was added..." How can you add it when it says you can't add? There comes the controversy!

We are talking about covenant, v 16: "Now, to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken.... [of the covenant] ...He does not say, 'and to *your* seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'and to your Seed,' which is Christ. Now this I say, *that the* covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ cannot be annulled by the Law, which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect" (vs 16-17).

Let's take v 17 and look at it in the *Interlinear*: "This now I say, *the* covenant confirmed... [ratified] ...beforehand by God to Christ, the... [In the Greek this is an 'omega' with a breathing sign and is pronounced 'ho.' That comes all the way down to the law.] (In the Greek it is): ...the after years four hundred and thirty which took place law... [it's a little awkward in the literal order] ...does not annul so as to make of no effect the promise."

(go to the next track)

Whenever Paul uses the definite article *the* law, in Galatians 3 he is talking about the covenant that was given to Israel. Shortened in its definition,

the law. That's what becomes very confusing. The other ones where it's translated 'the works of the law' there's no definite article, it's just *works of law*. Here we have 'the law' with a definite article, which we will see means the covenant given to Israel. I just wanted you to see that where it says 'the law' does have the definite article.

Verse 17 (FV): "Now this I say, *that the* covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ cannot be annulled by **the law**, which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect." You can't add to it.

Verse 18: "For if the inheritance *is* by law, *it is* no longer by promise...." What he's saying is that in the covenant given to Israel—which was the Law—there were no promises of eternal life. That's what he's saying. If there were a law then it's not a promise, because if you *perform* the law you don't have to believe.

Example: If someone calls you on the phone and says, 'You must come down here and sign this affidavit by 3 o'clock, and if you do you'll get \$100,000. That takes no faith. You get there as fast as you can, you sign it, you get the \$100,000.

God say that if you believe in Christ and the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, I will give you eternal life at the resurrection. My guarantee is the Holy Spirit that I give you in the body that you carry around. You will be in the resurrection. **You've got to believe!** The law is not that way.

Verse 18: "For if the inheritance *is* by law, *it is* no longer by promise. But God granted *it* to Abraham by promise.... [now comes the big question]: ...Why then the Law?...."—the covenant given to Israel. Why was that? It didn't change the promise given to Abraham. I could not, because that was ratified and it can't be changed. Why then, *the Law?*

This is the thing that led me to begin understanding this some 35 years ago. Verse 19 (KJV): "Wherefore then serves the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made..." We were told that the explanation meant this: the law of the sacrifices was added to the Ten Commandments because the children of Israel sinned.

I didn't know it, but when I was in Idaho, there were a couple of Church of God Seventh Day ministers I was in contact with, and I found out that that's the doctrine from the Church of God Seventh Day.

So, when Herbert Armstrong was teaching it, he was teaching Church of God Seventh Day

doctrine, based upon this verse in Deut. 5, and this became the whole basis of the paper that I wrote. This all sounds very logical that sacrifices were added to the Ten Commandments, because the children of Israel sinned. This verse seems to substantiate it:

Deuteronomy 5:22: "The LORD spoke these words to all your assembly in the mountain out of the midst of the fire of the cloud and of the thick darkness with a great voice. **And He added no more...**" *God ceased speaking!* It doesn't say anywhere that He added the sacrifices to the Ten Commandments. If you go through and analyze it, you will see that God intended to give all the sacrifices.

What did Moses tell Pharaoh when he said, 'Let my people go, that we may go into the wilderness and do sacrifice'? God intended sacrifice. Sacrifices were a part of the whole Old Covenant. This is not talking about sacrifices of animals in relationship to the Ten Commandments. This is talking about the Law, which is the covenant given to Israel in relationship to the covenant and promises given to Abraham. That's what it's talking about.

Galatians 3:19 (FV): "Why then the Law?.... [the covenant to Israel] ...It was placed alongside *the promises...*" You can't add to it, but you can place alongside. I can make a covenant with you and you and you and place those all alongside each other. But the covenant with #1 is different than the covenant with #2 and different than the covenant with #3, and the terms of the covenant with #1 has nothing to do with terms of the covenant with #2, and the terms of the covenant with #3.

The terms of the covenant that God gave to Israel called the Law couldn't be added to what the covenant was that He gave to Israel 430 years before, because you can't add to it. But you can make a new covenant and place it alongside the covenant with Abraham. That's what Paul is saying here.

Exodus 24—here's where the covenant with Israel was ratified. How was it ratified? This was before they sinned, by the way, because they didn't sin until Exo. 32. It's before!

Exodus 24:3: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments. And all the people answered with one voice and said, 'All the words which the LORD has said, we will do.'" You have to agree to the covenant.

Verse 4: "And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and built an altar at the base of the mountain and twelve

pillars according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel who offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of bullocks to the LORD” (vs 4-5). Are these not sacrifices? *Yes!* Part of the Old Covenant. Sacrifices were not added to the Ten Commandments.

Notice what he did, v 6: “And Moses took half of the blood, and put *it* in basins, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And **he took the book of the covenant**... [which later became to be called *the Law*. That’s where the confusion comes in.] ...and read in the ears of the people. And they said, ‘All that the LORD has said we will do, and be obedient.’ And Moses took the blood and sprinkled *it* on the people, and said, ‘Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD has made with you concerning all these words’” (vs 6-8).

Now then, in the covenant with Christ, what is the blood of the New Covenant? *Christ’s blood!* That fulfills the promise given to Abraham, and Christ’s death ended the covenant given to Israel. That’s what we’re talking about in the whole thing here.

Galatians 3:19: “Why then the Law?.... [covenant given to Israel] ...It was placed alongside *the promises* for the purpose of *defining* transgressions...” The Law gives the knowledge of sin; it defines transgressions. Did the sacrifice of an animal ever define a transgression? *No!* It was an animal sacrifice for the purpose of the justification at the temple. It never defined what sin is. It was a sin offering, but the offering itself was not sin.

The Law defines what the sin is—transgression—“...until the Seed should come to Whom *the* promise was made... [That’s so we can receive the Holy Spirit and have the laws written in our heart and mind.] (the Old Covenant): ...having been ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator” (v 19). Moses was the first mediator.

Verse 20: “Now then, a mediator does not *act on behalf* of one...” I’m not going to come and sit down before someone and say ‘you have a problem so I’m going to mediate it.’ Two people come and say ‘we have a problem, let’s mediate it.’ They settled the airline strike because they had the Federal mediators between two parties.

In respect to the promise of grace, “...God is one” (v 20)—meaning *God acted unilaterally*. God did this on His own. God did it unilaterally! He didn’t have anybody else there to mediate between Him and Abraham—did He? *No!* There was no mediation there whatsoever!

Genesis 15:4: “And behold, the Word of the LORD *came* to him saying, ‘This man shall not be your heir; but he that shall come forth...’” Who did all the action? *God did!* Who did the following and believing? *Abraham did!* Abraham didn’t come to God and say, ‘I was out here trying to count the stars. Let’s bring in Eliezer of Damascus and let’s You and I sort of negotiate and he’ll be between us.’ No! God unilaterally did this!

Verse 5: “...‘Look now toward the heavens and number the stars—if you are able to count them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your seed be.’ And he believed in the LORD. And He accounted it to him for righteousness” (vs 5-6). The most important thing you can do is *believe* God! No mediator here.

But when we come to the covenant with Israel, who was the mediator? *Moses!* God spoke the Ten Commandments directly, and what happened? The people said, ‘*We can’t stand that anymore, we’re going to die, if we hear the voice of God anymore! You, Moses, you go to God and let Him tell you what He wants and you come to us and tell us and we’ll do it.*’ A mediator. In the case of Abraham there was no mediator.

Galatians 3:20: “Now then, a mediator does not *act on behalf* of one; but God is one.... [But in respect to grace—which was the covenant made to Abraham—God is one, or that is God acted unilaterally.] ...*Is* the Law then contrary to the promises of God?...” (vs 20-21).

In the *Interlinear*, the definite article is there. There’s another word in-between, which means *then*. It has to be put in second position by the grammar by the Greek laws of grammar: ‘*Ho* *oun* *nomos*’ So, when we translate it we place the ‘then’ in the proper position—*the law then*. But the definite article is there, referring to the covenant made with Israel called *the Law*—‘*ho* *nomos*’

Verse 21 (*Int*): “The law then [is it] against the promises of God?....”

Verse 21 (*FV*): *Is* the Law... [the covenant given to Israel] ...then contrary to the promises of God?.... [given to Abraham] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* righteousness... [right standing with God] ...would indeed have been by law.”

That, again, is kind of hard one to understand, because it says in Psa. 119:72 ‘all Your commandments are righteousness.’ When I first read this, when I was first reading Galatians, it blew my mind. I couldn’t understand it.

This righteousness is the righteousness of

being in *right standing with God through Jesus Christ*. If the Law had been given that had the power to give life, what have men been looking for? What did Ponce de Leon come over here to the ‘new world’ for? *The fountain of life!* If he found it—which was a physical action that he could do—he would setup shop and charge. Would people come and pay? If you have a fee, that’s a law. The law is that you come to this fountain and you pay X amount of dollars, you drink of it and live forever.

- no repentance of sin
- no change of heart
- no conversion
- no Holy Spirit

If you understand everything we have covered here, please realize *you are understanding the most difficult Scriptures that the Apostle Paul wrote*, and have been compounded in their difficulty by the mistranslation of the King James Version of the Bible, by putting in the definite article ‘the’ for *works and the law* when it should not have been.

When Paul uses the definite article, he is talking about the Law, the covenant with Israel. We’re here as to why: “...For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* righteousness... [right standing with God so you can receive eternal life] ...would indeed have been by law.”

We’re talking about what it would have been like if Ponce de Leon had found a ‘fountain of life.’ As I said, he’d setup shop and start charging. The ones that belonged to the group would get it cheaper. The ones who were not of the group they would have to pay more.

God gives it by *gift*, because it is only through *repentance*—which requires more than a duty to keep a law; *a change of heart*—which requires more than paying a fee. You can always pay a fee, but it doesn’t change your heart.

Verse 22: “But the Scriptures have shut up all things under sin... [Think about that! God has shut up everyone up under sin. That’s hard to believe, but that’s what it says. Why has He shut them up under sin?]: ...so that by *the* faith of Jesus Christ the promise might be given to those who believe.”

John 6:44: “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him...”

John 14:6: “...no one comes to the Father except through Me.”

God is the One Who calls! He calls to bring you out of sin. So, the whole world is shut up unto

sin except those that He calls. Why?

1. to save those that He calls
2. to have mercy on the rest later at the second resurrection

He’s given them over to sin, whether it’s a little sin or a lot of sin.

Galatians 3:23: “Now before faith came... [making eternal life possible through belief] ...we were guarded under law...”

Verse 23 (*Int*): “But before came faith, under law we were guarded...”—*under law* here does not have the definite article. So, it wasn’t just the Old Covenant, but under any of the laws that were there with Israel.

“...we were guarded under law... [You have some protection from sin—don’t you? *Sure you do!*] ...having been shut up unto the faith that was yet to be revealed” (v 23). He’s saying that Israel was cutoff all the way until Christ came.

Verse 24: “In this way, **the law**... [‘ho nomos’—the Old Covenant; making it very specific here] ...was our tutor *to lead us* to Christ that we might be justified by faith. But since faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor” (vs 24-25).

The Law was a tutor to teach you what is right and wrong. Once you are under Christ and have the Holy Spirit, what teaches you then? *The Holy Spirit gives you understanding!* Likewise, when you grow up and you graduate from school. You have learned all the things you need to learn so you can function as an adult—hopefully—so therefore, you are not under the authority of your teachers anymore. You can go live your life. You can go earn a living, have an occupation, profession, whatever it is. As long as you do it lawfully you’re not going to be under a tutor.

Now, if you break the law and do things contrary to the law of the land, the officer comes and knocks on your door and arrests you and now you are back under a tutor—this time the police—to restrict your actions because you went contrary to the law. You’ve done thus and such, you come before the judge and he says, ‘You are going to be in jail for three years.’ So, the law is a tutor to teach you for three years to not ever do that again. When you get out, maybe with good behavior you can get out in 18 months, and you say, ‘I will never do that again.’ Some never have the resolve. So, they are constantly under a tutor and must be put in jail, some people for life. That’s what it means here.

“...The Law was our tutor *to lead us* to Christ that we might be justified by faith. But since

faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor, because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus” (vs 24-26).

This next verse you will understand, and this is for salvation, v 27: “For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.” If you have the Holy Spirit, and if you follow the lead of the Holy Spirit—let the laws and commandments of God be written in your heart and mind—you don’t need someone standing there saying, ‘do this, do that, do the other thing.’ You will do it because it’s written in your heart and in your mind. That’s all through the operation of baptism.

In standing before God for salvation, v 28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**”—for salvation!

- There are still Jews and there are still Greeks.
- There are still those who are free and those who bond.
- There are still male and female.

—in things pertaining to those living in the life of flesh. But it has nothing whatsoever to do with salvation. A wife is not going to be saved because her husband is. A husband is not going to be saved because his wife is. You’re not going to receive salvation because you’re a Jew and you exclude all the Greeks.

Verse 29: “**And if you are Christ’s, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.**” The whole covenant that God gave to Abraham, ratified to him and Christ then becomes the New Covenant—His body; His blood—and you then become the true seed of Abraham, the *spiritual seed!* That takes away all boasting and all works, all of those things.

Here is another way of expressing the very same thing that Paul did in a very complicated way, Ephesians 2:8: “For by grace you have been saved... [the promise of believing] ...through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves... [didn’t originate with you or because you are Abraham’s seed] ...**it is the gift of God**... [a free gift] ...not of works...” (vs 8-9) that you can do on your own, or that you can add to what God does. That’s why Protestantism and Catholicism become so wrong. They take the Gospel of Christ and they add so many things to it that they have their own works.

“...so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we

might walk in them” (vs 9-10). What are the good works? *Commandments of God!*

Let’s understand something very clearly concerning the commandments of God: When they are applied spiritually, they are part of grace. Not contrary to grace. They are the good works that God has given, that we should walk in them. That’s important to realize.

That’s why when you come to this whole difficult thing concerning the book of Galatians, especially chapters two and three, when the Protestants not knowing the understanding of the background, not realizing the difference between *the law* and *works of law* and not understanding the problem in the translation of the *King James Version* of the Bible, have misconstrued the meaning of it, so they come up with the wrong conclusion.

Therefore, while they accuse us of being under the *curse of the Law*—because we keep the commandments of God—they in fact are under the *curse of the Law* because they are not doing the things that God has said.

I’m beginning to understand that almost every doctrine of Protestantism comes out the exact opposite of what they say it is. We are not being saved by the *work* of Sabbath-keeping. God blesses us with His presence and His Spirit and His grace, and in keeping the Sabbath we have fellowship with Him and each other. That’s not a work from us. That is from God! God is the One Who said to ‘remember the Sabbath Day, to keep it Holy.’

When these things came down in the Church of God in such a way that they did, they were totally unprepared and were so dumbed down in their understanding that Satan could get in there and bring about a misinterpretation and have them accept that as Truth and thereby *deceive* them. I hope that many repent. But unless they come to the understanding of this, there are going to be some who die in their deception and may lose eternal life.

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version* by Fred R. Coulter (except where noted)

Scriptural References:

- 1) Galatians 3:1
- 2) 2 Timothy 3:15-16
- 3) Galatians 3:1-5
- 4) Romans 1:16-17
- 5) Romans 5:5
- 6) Galatians 3:5-7, 29, 8-10
- 7) Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15
- 8) Galatians 3:10
- 9) Deuteronomy 27:26
- 10) Galatians 3:11-15, 19, 16-19

- 11) Deuteronomy 5:22
- 12) Galatians 3:19
- 13) Exodus 24:3-8
- 14) Galatians 3:19-20
- 15) Genesis 15:4-6
- 16) Galatians 3:20-22
- 17) John 6:44
- 18) John 14:6
- 19) Galatians 3:23-29
- 20) Ephesians 2:8-10

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- John 4
- Matthew 5-7
- Genesis 9
- Exodus 32
- Psalm 119:172

Also referenced:

Books:

- *The Christian Passover* by Fred R. Coulter
- *A Harmony of the Gospels* by Fred R. Coulter

Sermon Series: *Refuting Sunday-Keeping #14*
(specifically: *What is the Administration of Death?*)

FRC:bo
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