

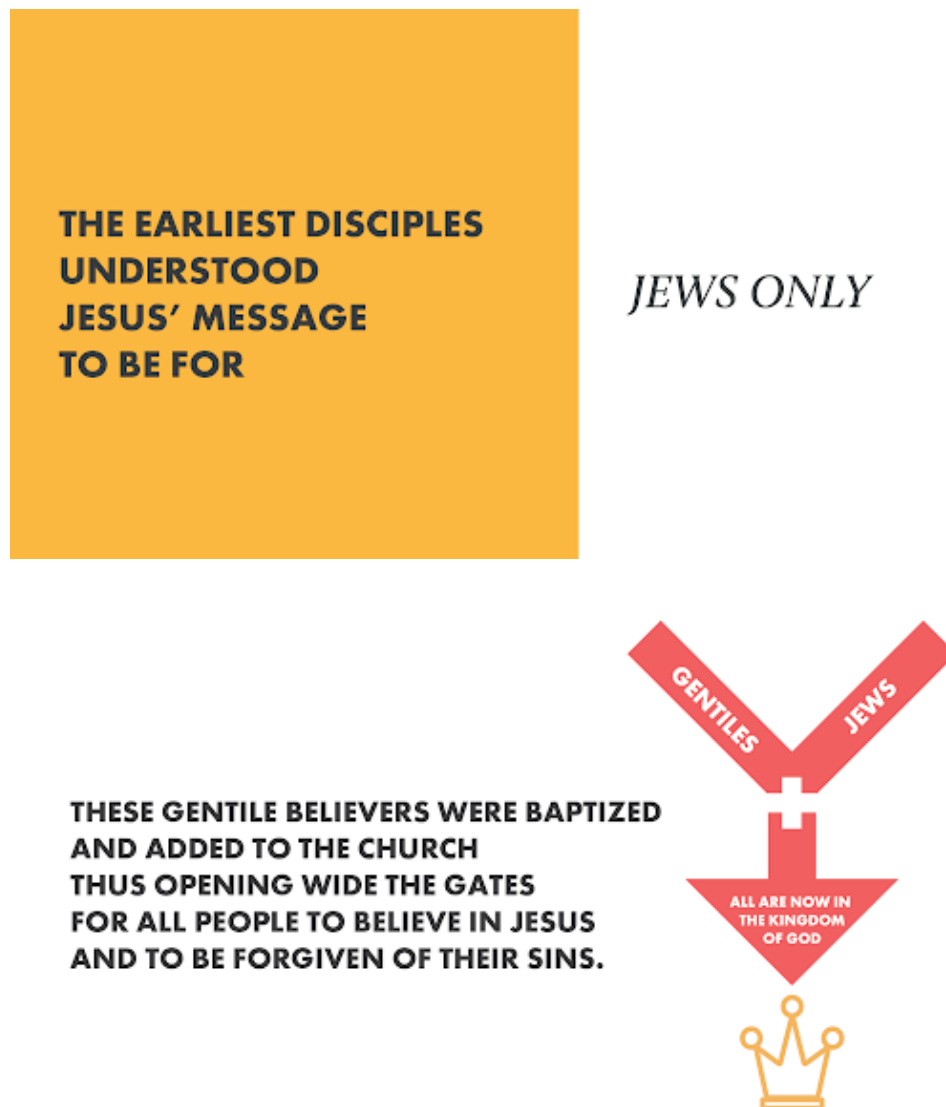


# WEEK 3

GALATIANS CHAPTER 3

In Galatians chapter 3, Paul says, *"You have the Spirit. How did that happen? Did you do some action that summoned Him? Or did He come to you through the faith God granted you? Now that you've got the Spirit, why are you trying to do something to gain God's approval? The Spirit is God's seal of approval!"* Then he summarizes an important idea in a succinct way, twice. *"It is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham"* (3:7). And, *"If you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise"* (3:29). He's writing this letter to Gentiles. Even though God has a unique, irreplaceable relationship with ethnic Israel, Gentiles are still counted among the descendants of Abraham. That relationship isn't contingent on ethnicity or circumcision; it's contingent on faith in Christ and available to anyone of any ethnicity, Jew or Gentile. Four hundred thirty years before God gave the law to Moses, He promised Abraham that all the nations of the earth would be blessed through Him. Salvation has always been about faith in YHWH and has always been available for anyone who has that. *"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus"* (3:28). What an incredible relief! Because of Christ, the door is open to everyone. And because of the Spirit, we're united across our differences.

Written by Tara-Leigh Cobble - *The Bible Recap*





**“THERE IS NEITHER JEW NOR GREEK,  
THERE IS NEITHER SLAVE NOR FREE,  
THERE IS NO MALE AND FEMALE, FOR  
YOU ARE ALL ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.”**

**GALATIANS 3:28**

## WEEK 3

### DAY 15 - MONDAY

*Galatians 3:1-9, Genesis 15:1-6, Matthew 3:1-12*

#### JUSTIFICATION THROUGH FAITH

The Galatians had done what so many of us do: turned to good works (in their case this was living by the Jewish ceremonial law) as their means of justification. They were living as if their standing in the eyes of God was based on their actions. This is why Paul reacted so strongly. He hammers them with rhetorical questions each of which smashes the foundation for their false sense of justification.

- "Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by believing what you heard?"
- "Does God give you the Spirit and work miracles among you by your doing or by works of the law?"
- "Or is it by believing what you heard—just like Abraham who believed God and it was credited to him for righteousness?"

This last question is incredibly significant for people seeking to be good Jews, to follow the law. It harkens back to their patriarch and his standing before God. In Genesis 15, God promises Abraham, an old man, an heir who will lead to offspring as numerous as the stars. Abraham believed this promise and it was "credited to him as righteousness"—that is, his faith was his righteousness in the eyes of God. Abraham, the father of God's people, was justified by faith. The Galatians could not rest on their law-based laurels. A few years prior John the Baptist had warned about this very thing when he preached the coming of Jesus: "Do not presume to say to yourselves 'We have Abraham as our father.'" (Matthew 3:1-12) He then preaches repentance and the coming of Christ, the true messiah.

Paul ends this section with the clarifying, defining words: "those who have faith, these are Abraham's sons." He does not dismiss the significance of Abraham or God's promise to him. No, he clarifies it. Abraham was promised to be the father of a great nation through whom all the nations of the world would be blessed (gentiles, like me and most of you). How does this happen? Through Jesus, the offspring of Abraham. We are made right in the eyes of God by faith in Jesus and no other way, no other action, no other law. So it is that faith that folds us into the family of Abraham, the people of God.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

**HOW DOES IT FEEL TO KNOW  
YOU ARE PART OF GOD'S BIG  
DIVERSE FAMILY?**

**WHAT DID GOD REVEAL  
TO YOU THROUGH THESE  
SCRIPTURES TODAY?**

## WEEK 3

### DAY 16- TUESDAY

*Galatians 3:1-9, Romans 4:13-25*

#### FAITH COUNTED AS RIGHTEOUSNESS

In these verses, we see Abraham displaying such unwavering faith. He was sure that God would do what He had promised. Abraham trusted God to work despite his wife's barrenness to fulfill what seemed to be an impossible promise. The scriptures say that Abraham's faith was credited to him as righteousness. When God promised Abraham that he would be the father of many nations, Abraham didn't try to earn that promise from God; he didn't even try to fully understand it, he simply believed what God said, that's faith. Romans 4:20 says, "No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God..." So if Abraham was declared righteous simply because of his faith, why do we (and The Galatians) feel like we need to add extra rules for people to be included in the family of God?

As Tony Evans puts it in his Bible commentary, "Abraham's family both Jews and Gentiles—are those who have faith in God, not those who seek to keep the law. The gospel was announced ahead of time to Abraham when God promised that all the nations would be blessed through him. They would be blessed through "the seed" of Abraham, Jesus Christ (Gal 3:16, 19). God's blessings come to those who have faith like Abraham (3:9), who exercised faith before the giving of the law."

Tim Keller says it this way in his book *Galatians for You*, "When God credits righteousness, He is conferring a legal status on someone. He treats them as actually righteous and free from condemnation, even though they are still actually unrighteous in their heart and behavior. They are 'justified'. This flies in the face of all traditional religion, which tells us that either we are living righteously and are therefore pleasing and acceptable to God, or we are living unrighteously and are therefore alienated from God. But Paul (and Abraham) are showing that it is possible to be loved and accepted by God while we are ourselves sinful and imperfect."

**HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE FAITH?**

**WHY IS IT HOPEFUL THAT IT IS BY FAITH YOU ARE CREDITED AS RIGHTEOUS?**

## WEEK 3

### DAY 17 - WEDNESDAY

*Galatians 3:10-18, Genesis 12:1-7, 1 Peter 2:24-25*

#### LAW AND PROMISE

One of the most foundational truths of the gospel, of being a Christian, is that we are unable to save ourselves because we are sinners. In our nature we are rebellious against God and cannot make ourselves righteous and good enough to enter his perfect Holy presence and be right in his eyes. Somehow, some way, though, we convince ourselves that good works will save us and that following a moral code will gain us justification in God's eyes. It is an easy thing to believe: do good and earn rewards. In this way we are like the Galatians. What Paul says is something much stronger than "this is incorrect" or "make some adjustments to your thinking." He says "all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse . . . it is clear that no one is justified before God by the law." Not only was the Galatians' focus on law-keeping failing to save, it was keeping them under a curse of judgement by God. By depending on the law they were condemning themselves to hell.

Thank God the passage does not stop there, nor does the gospel. Paul does not leave us with bad news but rather wipes away the curse of the law by looking to Jesus in faith: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming the curse for us." 1 Peter 2:24 says he "bore our sins in his body on the tree" The curse of the law was broken by the sacrifice of Jesus. The promise of salvation is not just an individual thing. This is a promise for the nations, a fulfilling of God's covenant to Abraham. In Genesis 12:1-7 God calls Abraham to follow him and promises to make Abraham into a great nation. This blessing is not Abraham's ego or world domination; it is a promise to bring hope to the world through Abraham's offspring. "I will make your name great and you will be a blessing . . . and all the peoples on earth will be blessed through you." The law, which came centuries later than this promise, doesn't change it. The law served a different purpose altogether. Salvation is through Jesus alone, and all who have faith in Jesus are members of the promise God made to Abraham, both blessed and commissioned to spread the blessing of Christ to our world.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

**READ GALATIANS 3:18 AGAIN.  
WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO YOU  
THAT OUR INHERITANCE COMES  
BY A PROMISE INSTEAD OF BY  
THE LAW?**

**WHAT DID GOD REVEAL TO YOU  
TODAY?**



## WEEK 3

### DAY 18 -THURSDAY

*Galatians 3:10-18, Isaiah 53:1-12*

#### THE SERVANT'S PRIESTLY WORK

Isaiah 53 reveals a prophecy written hundreds of years before it would actually happen, the prophet tells of Jesus' death and resurrection in an unbelievably accurate way. The ESV Study Bible says, "This is the servant's priestly work on behalf of those he represents, securing their acceptance before God." These passages are filled with hope because Jesus took what was supposed to be our curse...our punishment and credited us with righteousness instead.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

WHAT STOOD OUT TO YOU IN  
THE ISAIAH VERSES TODAY?

## WEEK 3

### DAY 19 - FRIDAY

*Galatians 3:19-29, Jeremiah 31:31-34, Romans 3:21-31*

#### THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW

Paul recognizes that the previous 18 verses have seemingly diminished and undermined the law of God, the very commands God gave his people as a means of being set apart for holiness as his own. Rather than doing what we are often so prompt to do and taking an extreme position Paul answers it in a sequence of clarifying statements adding depth and nuance to our understanding of God's plan and purpose.

First, the law was "added for the sake of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise was made would come." (v.19) Paul clarifies this a few verses later in 3:24 when it says "the law, then, was our guardian until Christ." The Old Testament law was a protective measure, a gift from God to show his people what sin was, what honoring him required, and to guide them to an understanding of righteousness.

Second, makes abundantly clear that the law is not contrary or in opposition to the promise of God to save through Jesus. In 3:21 he explains that the law was not given with the ability to give life. It was never designed to be the means of justification. Following the law without faith was never salvific. God gave the law to protect his people, guide his people, and teach his people their need for a true and perfect savior.

Jeremiah 31 helps us understand the connection between the law (old covenant) and the promise of Jesus (new covenant). In verses 31-34 the Lord declares that he will make a new covenant, not like the old one which Israel broke (and like we break the law). This covenant will be written on their hearts, that is, it will be believed by faith and given by the Spirit. The old covenant law paves the way for the new covenant. Hebrews 10:1 clarifies even further by describing the law as "shadow of good things to come." The sacrifices and rituals of the old covenant law could never purify and never justify, but they echoed forward to the promised saving sacrifice of Jesus.

So what was the purpose of the law? It protected. It foreshadowed. It echoed. This was God's intention, not to save through the law but to create a family for himself: "Through faith you are all sons of God in Christ Jesus." Before Jesus their faith was in the one true God and a coming savior, and it was credited to them as righteousness. Since Jesus' ascension our faith is in him as the perfect sacrifice, the mediator and great high priest, and the coming King.

Written by Barnabas Piper - *He Reads Truth*

**DESCRIBE WHAT YOU THINK THE PURPOSE OF THE LAW WAS.**

**WHAT DO YOU THINK THE JEREMIAH PASSAGE MEANS WHEN IT SAYS "I WILL PUT MY LAW WITHIN YOU"? WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO HAVE THE LAW WRITTEN ON YOUR HEART?**



## WEEK 3

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### DAY 20 - SATURDAY - GRACE DAY

*Use today to rest, pray and catch up on any of this week's reading that you missed.*

**In this week's reading:**

1. *What themes did you see emerge?*
2. *What was the biggest thing that God revealed to you this week?*
3. *What next step do you need to take based on what He revealed to you this week?*

## WEEK 3

### DAY 21 - SUNDAY - REFLECTION DAY

#### *Reflect on these passages:*

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

**Galatians 3:28**

He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed.

**I Peter 2:24**

For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, declares the LORD: I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.

**Jeremiah 31:33**

For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

**Romans 3:23-24**

Sin flattens us, all unworthy. But Christ redeems us, and presents us beautifully clean, whole, and unified before God. Christianity is open and welcoming to all, and in it "there is no Jew or Greek, slave or free, male and female; since you are all one in Christ Jesus."

Written by Melanie Ranier - *She Reads Truth*

#### **REFLECTION QUESTIONS FOR WEEK 3**

What expectations do I have for other believers, and for myself?

What do I think Christians should look like, act like? How should they think and feel?

What do I add to the truth, or what do I believe that others have added?