

STUDYING GALATIANS

BIBLE STUDY OUTREACH @ 1984, 1993

LESSON 8
Galatians 3: 12 - 18

The Life-style Of A Free Person

Galatians 3 gives us a two-part picture of what the book is about. One is a picture of salvation as it has always been, through faith. The other is of what the law was really meant to do, that is, to give sin the character of transgression and prove that man is helpless to save himself.

We owe our Lord Jesus Christ a debt which we, from our own resources, can never repay. He became a curse for us. Do you know what that really is? It means the sinless Son of God bore our sin which separated us from God. Think of it! It was a horrible, degrading experience for Him yet it happened because the hearts of all men are evil. We cannot tolerate, in our natural arrogance, to have anyone criticize us or say anything cutting or untruthful to us or about us. To have someone curse us or call us nasty names is so humiliating that we immediately become angry and have an overpowering urge to retaliate. Yet Jesus was led to the cross without a word in His own defense.

Verse 12 shows us that those who live by the law do not live by faith. This is a clear renunciation of being justified by law in God's eyes. If we are justified by law we must give up Christ.

In verse 13 there are two curses, the curse of the law and the curse Jesus became! The curse of the law is a curse upon ALL mankind. The curse Jesus became removes the curse of the law from ALL mankind who believe Him for it.

Paul used an Old Testament Scripture to bring home the point he was making about Jesus' becoming a curse. He used Deuteronomy 21:23 which says, "His body shall not remain all night upon a tree, but you shall surely bury Him that day (for he who is hanged is accursed by God), that your land shall not be defiled, which the Lord God gives you for an inheritance." The Jewish method of execution was not hanging, that was a Roman execution. The Jews executed by stoning. The hanging on a tree was a very despicable way of dishonoring a person. It was a Jewish custom to hang an executed corpse on a tree to publicly declare him a lawbreaker. Christ, the Sinless One, suffered this humiliation while yet alive! He gave Himself to this cause before He came to earth to die. Peter talked about this when he confronted the men of Israel with these words, "Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain (Jesus)." We can better understand why Paul tells us, "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law," because Jesus became that curse with the foreknowledge of God. It was God's purpose to remove sin by this means. Paul is very clear in saying Christ died to remove sin. Paul said he was personally allied to Christ in His death, that he had been crucified with Christ.

The curse of hanging on a tree was not necessarily an eternal curse. However, if there had been no provision for the soul of a hanged man, there would have been no release from eternal death and torment. The curse had to be removed, for it condemned all men. All were sinners under law, that was final. God had no intention of the curse being final. He made a way of escape. Hebrews 5:8,9 gives us a glimpse of God's plan through Jesus. It says, "Though He was a Son, He learned obedience through what He suffered; and being made perfect He became the source of eternal salvation to ALL who obeyed Him." What a glorious rescue for us! Christ removed the curse so that "whosoever will" is free to enter into a righteous relationship with God through His shed blood on the cross. The curse of the Law stood in the way of the covenant blessing made with Abraham, for ALL the people of the earth. It was removed!

During the 40 days after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection He appeared to many, both individuals and groups, believers and unbelievers. He encouraged and instructed. He demonstrated the power of His risen Person to prove to them that all He had told them before His death was true. So it was that just before His ascension to heaven He refreshed the memories of the disciples by reminding them of the promise of the Holy Spirit (which was to be given to ALL of Abraham's seed). He said, "Wait for the promise of the Father, which you have heard of from me, for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:4,5)>

Jesus' removal of the sin question allowed the Holy Spirit to come. Now, the children of God have the same power Jesus had after God raised Him up from the dead, freeing Him from the agony of death. Jesus' life within every believer gives resurrection power to that person. Jesus has provided a new way for each to live and to die. His life will conquer death, raise us up and He will enable us to live a life-style acceptable to God. We now can understand the fact that we can depend, by faith, upon God's covenant made with Abraham 4,000 years ago. That is, through his "seed" we are saved. The "Seed" is CHRIST. We are raised up with Christ. We are free from sin and death. Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers and told them that Jesus was the Spirit, and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty" (2 Cor. 3:17), and Christ lives in everyone who has been freed from the curse of the law.

It is certain that Abraham's covenant with God takes precedence over the law. Paul said the law was introduced 430 years after the covenant but it does not set the covenant aside, for if the inheritance depended on the law, then it no longer depended upon a promise; but God, in His grace saw to our inheritance through His promise to Abraham.

How can this lesson help us to have the life-style of a free person? It is simple, Jesus is our example! He had great liberty to move about in a sinful world; showing concern and ministering to people. He was always conscious of the lost state of the individual's soul and He was always willing to share His salvation with them. Jesus never complained about someone else's life-style. He gave them freedom to be themselves and He gave them love as they were. An example of Jesus' tolerance of the individual is in His relationship with His cousin John, called the Baptist. John was so different from Jesus. His approach to giving God's message was totally different, but Jesus valued John's ministry and applauded him as a person. Jesus didn't pick people because they were important, He looked into their hearts. Zacchaeus was up in a sycamore tree. He wanted to see Jesus, and Jesus looked up at him and said, "Come down, I am going to your house." When Jesus comes to you and speaks, His intention is to come and make changes in your life. Zacchaeus was changed; he was never the same after Jesus came into his life. Jesus turned his heart from greed to giving, from hatred to love, to seeking other people's welfare instead of his own. Zacchaeus wanted the new freedom to worship God and live the life-style Christ provided. He climbed out of the tree and went with Jesus to a totally new way of life. Jesus will do this for you if you will trust Him for it. So look up! He is in power, seated on the right hand of God were He intercedes for you before the Father. Praise His Name!

STUDYING GALATIANS

BIBLE STUDY OUTREACH @ 1984, 1993

LESSON 8
Galatians 3: 12 - 18

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE UPON:

“If then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God” (Colossians 3:1 RSV).

Are the words of Colossians 3:1 just words to you or do they really mean something special, something that gives you great freedom to worship God, to live a victorious life over sin? As “God’s chosen ones” we have freedom in forbearing one another, forgiving, having patience and meekness, and in putting “on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.”

IF you have been raised up with Christ:

- 1) You have liberty because He purchased it. He suffered in your place!
- 2) You have liberty because He has bestowed it, FREELY!
- 3) You have liberty because you are no longer under the law. You are free from its curse!
- 4) You are at liberty to serve God with gratitude and delight out of a heart overflowing with the love of Christ within you!

QUESTIONS:

1. Read Gal. 3:11 for review. Write it out, and memorize it.
2. Explain Gal. 3:12 in your own words.
3.
 - a. Look up the definition of redeemed and use it in relation to v.13.
 - b. Read Isaiah 44:22 over several times and tell how you can be comforted by it.
4. From the definition of the word “curse,” tell why you think it could be used to describe the law.
5.
 - a. What does Deut. 27:26 say?
 - b. How does this verse help you understand your liberty “in Christ”?

6.
 - a. What does Rom. 10:4 say that coincides with Gal. 3:13?
 - b. What is your response to these scriptures?
7. Read the notes. In your own words write out briefly what they tell you about “hanging on a tree.”
8.
 - a. From the notes, tell what kept the blessing of Abraham from all mankind, and again, give the verse that annuls it.
 - b. What does Eph. 1:13,14 tell you about the Holy Spirit?
9. Regarding God’s Covenant with Abraham, how long was it to last, and was it conditional?
10.
 - a. Tell why it says “Seed” instead of “seeds”.
 - b. How was the covenant confirmed and how could it be annulled?
11.
 - a. What are the results of the Law, as shown in Rom. 4:15?
 - b. Tell what Rom. 8:1 says that gives you comfort.
12. Read Matt. 1:16 and Gen. 3:15. Explain what significance there is in relation to Gal. 3:16.
13. How does Rom. 5:14 - 21 relate to what Paul tells us in Gal. 3:17?
14.
 - a. What argument did Paul use in v.18 to prove the authenticity of the promise?
 - b. What further information does the author of Hebrews give in Heb. 6:13?
 - c. Read 1 Cor. 6:9,10 and give:
The question.

What we are not to be deceived about.
15.
 - a. God, by His grace, promised Abraham an inheritance. Read Ephesians 2:8. Tell what it says that blesses you.
 - b. As a challenge, read Rom. 5:1,2 and tell what “His grace” means to YOU! (“Grace” is omitted in some version, and that is sad.)