

# GALATIANS

## 3:15-29 | STUDY GUIDE

### All Sons

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**GALATIANS 3:15**, "...even with a man-made covenant, no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified." (ESV)

- The Law & God's Promise
  - The Promise: "Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ." (3:16)
  - The promise isn't "under" the law: that would make it contingent on the law
  - Abraham's "seed" refers to Christ
  - The righteous live by their faith
    - Habakkuk 2:4
  - The Law: "...the law, which came 430 years afterward, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to make the promise void." (3:17)
    - The Law served a purpose
    - Guardian = babysitter/tutor
    - Christ fulfilled it
      - Matthew 5:17

**GALATIANS 3:20**, "Now an intermediary implies more than one, but God is one." (ESV)

- Perhaps the most confusing verse in the New Testament!
  - What we know is that Christ is now our intermediary

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**GALATIANS 3:21**, "Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law." (ESV)

- Because of the way this age of promise and of faith affected so many aspects of everyday life, it seems many Jews (and surely Gentiles) were questioning the validity of The Law in the first place
  - Paul makes clear that in the same way Israel was once enslaved, so too was the whole world.
  - The reality is a fallen world awaiting a promise

**GALATIANS 3:22**, "But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe." (ESV)

- This is not about Scripture being against us
  - Sin confines us and denies us freedom because we are incapable of redeeming ourselves—we can't stop sinning or ever make ourselves perfect
- Only faith in Christ can free us

**GALATIANS 3:24**, "So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith." (ESV)

- The Law was instructional
  - It offered protection
  - It was not a permanent parent, but rather watched over us as we waited for the promise

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**GALATIANS 3:28-29**, "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. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise." (ESV)

- The promise unites
- Later Paul will examine the two halves of Abraham's descendants: Jew and Gentile
  - Here Paul uses a distinctly Greek analogy: slave vs freeborn

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:** N.T. Wright, *The New Testament In its World*, Craig S. Keener, *Galatians: A Commentary*, *Archaeological Study Bible*