

Our Mission:

*To share Christ with the world
and grow disciples for Jesus*



Loving God and Loving Neighbor as Ourselves

Background:

Paul basically argues that the purpose of the law was to restrict our evil desires and thereby keep us in God's will, but that faith in the love of God not only sets us free from the law but serves as the means by which we ourselves engage in acts of love. In other words, Paul goes back to Abraham and the covenant God established through him, not one based upon the law, but one forged out of God's engagement in a compassionate relationship with the Father of Faith.

Theology Connection:

The law convicts. The law rightfully condemns us for our rebellion, or our sin. Yet faith in the goodness of God as offered by Christ is credited as righteousness. As a result, even though our reality as sinners has not been changed, the love of Christ, changes our perception of self and the world at large. No longer need we engage in contests of comparison as to who is better or not, for that is all to be forgotten as well as forgiven. Now we are united in the love of God, and that is more than enough.

Application:

This text is a reminder that no one is greater or lesser in the Kingdom of God. We are all one in Christ Jesus. As a result, I need not put myself or others down, but simply acknowledge that God is at work in and through me as well as others. Trusting that to be true, perhaps we can begin to form what Christ intended, communities of shalom or of peace.

The Text: Galatians 3:1-9, 23-29

3 ¹You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. ²I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?

³Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh? ⁴Have you experienced so much in vain—if it really was in vain?

⁵So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard? ⁶So also Abraham "believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

⁷Understand, then, that those who have faith are children of Abraham. ⁸Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you."

⁹So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

²³Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. ²⁴So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

²⁶So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, ²⁷for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

²⁸There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

²⁹If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

ADULT

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YOUTH

Now I had to read this a couple times to understand it. Sometimes the text can be confusing and that is ok. We all get confused on what the author is trying to say at times.

I believe this is a text about deceit and Jesus is upset not at the people who stumble at times, but he seems to be upset at those who deceive people to cause them to stumble. Why does Paul call the Galatians “foolish” and “bewitched”? What are some ways you might preach the gospel of God’s grace to yourself?

How would you have responded?

Let us pray:

Dear God, thank you for saving us by grace through faith in the cross. Please help us stay on the right path and protect us from deceit. In Jesus’ name Amen.

CHILDREN’S

What do you have to do to be accepted into God’s family? Do you have to complete a list of things that will make you worthy of God’s love? Do you have to act a certain way or say certain things? No! When we hear the Good News and acknowledge that Jesus is the one true God, we are saved by His love! Does God only bless those who do certain things? No, he blesses us all the same because we are all children of God! If we believe in God and have faith in Him, we are saved and will spend eternal life with Him in heaven. When we follow Jesus, we are all the same! There is no difference between male and female, old or young, rich, or poor, we are all loved the same and will receive God’s incredible blessings!

1. What are some ways that you can grow in your relationship with God?
2. What is your favorite promise that God has made to us?
3. What are some ways that you can share the love of God with others?

Remember:

There is no list of things that we must complete to be welcomed into God’s family. We simply need to have faith and trust Him with all things!

Pray:

Dear Heavenly Father,

We love You so much! Please help us to live in ways that reflect Your acceptance and love for us. Please keep us safe, happy, and healthy.

In Your precious name we pray. Amen.