

Sunday, January 10, 2009—Grace Life School of Theology—Understanding Galatians and the Law—Galatians 3:10-12

Galatians 3:10

- *“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written,”*
- The idea here is that those who are seeking righteousness from the source of the law/works are under the curse of the law.
- Our English word “curse” in verse 11 comes from the Greek word *kata*, which carries the following meanings: a) the curse proceeding from God, b) the rejection caused by judgment, c) the destruction caused by judgment. It the equivalent to judgment without mercy.
- Deuteronomy 28:45, 48—the curses of the law were designed to destroy Israel.
- This verse is pretty clear, if you are working to get saved you are under the curse of the law.
- Romans 4:4-5
- *“for it is written, Cursed [is] every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.”*
- In order to illustrate his point, Paul quotes the Old Testament.
- Deuteronomy 27:26—how much of the law was Israel supposed to keep if she wanted to avoid the curse. The entire thing. If she offended in one point she would be subject to the curse of God.
- Deuteronomy 11:26-32—the law was a system of conditional blessings. At it took for Israel to be cursed was one misstep.
- James 2:10—all you have to do is break one law and you have broken the entire thing. According to Deuteronomy 27:26 once you have broken even one law you are under the curse of the law.
- The phrase *“the book of the law”* covers everything in the book of Deuteronomy and most of the Pentateuch.
- Joshua 1:7-8—defines the book of the law as the entirety of what Moses wrote.
- Some people today want to make a distinction between the moral law and the ceremonial law. These people teach that we do still need to follow certain aspects or portions of the law. The problem with this is that God makes no such distinction in his word.
- If you are trying to get to heaven by the works of the law you better make sure you have never done the following:

- Eaten bacon, oysters, lobsters, rabbit, catfish, or pork chops
 - Shaved in the morning (Lev. 19:27)
 - Held any grudges (Lev. 19:18)
 - Been tattooed (Lev. 19:28)
- The point here is that no one is able to keep the entire law and all it takes is one misstep for you to be subject to the curse. How many links need to break to break a chain? One. How many broken laws does it take to be a law breaker? One. How many broken laws does it take to be under the curse of the law? One.

Galatians 3:11

- *“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident: for, The just shall live by faith.”*
- This verse is a quotation from Habakkuk 2:4. Notice that in Habakkuk 2:4 the verse reads, *“Behold, his soul which is lifted up is not upright in him: but the just shall live by his faith.”*
- Paul’s omission here harkens back to what we discussed last week with the dual justification of Abraham. When Habakkuk originally wrote the verse under inspiration, God the Holy Spirit was writing to the nation of Israel. When Paul quotes the verse he uses it differently.
- Remember last week we discussed the difference between by faith and through faith? This verse helps illustrate the difference. For Old Testament saints under the law, their salvation was a combination of faith and works. Like we saw last week they believed what God told them to do (Hebrews 11:1-30).
- Faith in Paul’s usage is the gift of God and not even faith exercised in the finished work of Jesus Christ is considered a work (Romans 10:16, 4:5).
- The application of this verse is very clear in the context. If it only takes one wrong move to bring you under the curse of the law in verse 10, then clearly the only way for the just to live is by faith.
- Paul’s use of the word *“evident”* means to make clear. Therefore, Paul is saying that the only way the just can live is by faith.

Galatians 3:12

- *“And the law is not of faith: but, The man that doeth them shall live in them”*
- During the dispensation of Grace, one cannot choose to follow the law and be acting on the basis of faith.
- Once again, Paul is quoting from the Old Testament in this verse.

- Leviticus 18:5—notice if your going to attempt to follow the law you are going to have to live according to the law.
- Paul quotes from Leviticus 18:5 to prove that the law does not operate on the basis of faith, but on the basis of works. The verse declares, “*the man that doeth them*” (the works of the law) shall live by them.
- Since no one has perfectly followed the requirements of the law it is vary clear that life cannot come through the law.
- The bottom line is that it is impossible to legislate spirituality. True spirituality is obtained by the word of God working in the life of a believer.
- Colossians 2:14