

Sunday, February 7, 2010—Grace Life School of Theology—Understanding Galatians and the Law—Galatians 3:26-29

### **Opening Thoughts on Equality**

- Equality is a word that we hear a lot about in our day. Unfortunately our national history has been filled with injustices that don't match the founding ideals of the Declaration of Independence. African Americans, immigrants during the 1920s, Japanese during WWII, Native Americans and more recently Arab Americans have all been discriminated against.
- The single reason why such social injustices take place is because of sin. Sin affects ones entire outlook on life. From a human sense we can look and see all of the ways men are not equal. Some people are smarter than others, have more money than others, young or old, tall or short, ect.
- There are really only two ways that all men are equal with each other.
  - One, men are born sinners and thus separated form the life of God.
  - Two, the only place men are truly considered equal is in Jesus Christ.
- This morning we are going to see how in Christ, all the dividers of mankind are stripped away and there is true equality.
- Today we are going to entering the Hall of Heresy. Many of the incorrect teachings that haunt the Body of Christ can be found through an improper understanding of this passage. On the other hand, this is one of the greatest passages of scripture when it is placed into its proper dispensational context.

### **Galatians 3:26**

- *“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.”*
- The first thing we need to note in verse twenty six is that Paul has changed from the taking about “we” in verse twenty three and following to talking about “ye” in verse 26.
- In other words, Paul is talking once again to all of the Galatian saints both Jews and Gentiles.
- There exists in religious circles the idea that all men are children of God. These people say that it is our responsibility to find God in our own way. There are people who believe in the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man by quoting only half of the verse. All roads lead to God according to this type of thinking.
- The word of God is clear here in verse twenty six, the only way to become a child of God is to place faith in Jesus Christ.
- When this verse talks about being the children of God it is speaking about our Sonship status in Jesus Christ.

- Romans 8:14-17—when we place our faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ the Holy Spirit places us into Christ. One we are in Christ we become partakers of all that belongs to him.

### **Galatians 3:27**

- *“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”*
- Most of you can already see the potential problem that much of professing Christendom has with this verse. Baptism is automatically equated with water. If water baptism is referred to in this verse then the verse is teaching baptismal regeneration.
- J.B. Brown says that water baptism is a means of “spiritual transference; from one state into a living union with Christ.”
- *The Pulpit Commentary* states that “water baptism brings us into union with Christ, into union with life, and that the sacrament of water baptism puts men into Christ.”
- The basic meaning of the word baptize is identification. The word can be used in reference to both physical and spiritual identification. The context must determine the intended meaning.
- The scriptures speak about twelve distinct kinds of baptism, and only five of these have any reference to a ceremony involving water or any other physical substance.
- The seven baptisms that are either spiritual or figurative in nature are:
  - Matthew 3:11—Christ baptizing with the Holy Spirit, which took place on the day of Pentecost and resulted in the endowment with miraculous power from on high (Luke 24:49).
  - Luke 3:16—Christ baptizing with fire. From the context it appears that this baptism of fire is yet future and describes the phenomenon which will accompany Christ’s second coming.
  - I Corinthians 12:13—the Holy Spirit baptizing believers into the Body of Christ.
  - Luke 12:50—Christ’s baptism into death upon the cross.
  - I Peter 3:20-21—the typical baptism of Noah’s ark, the anti-type of which is Christ death baptism, the baptism which now saves us.
  - I Corinthians 10:2—the baptism of the children of Israel unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.
  - I Corinthians 15:29—this much debated baptism for the dead.
- The five ritual types of baptism mentioned in the scriptures are:

- Hebrews 9:9-10—the divers baptisms required of the Law (Leviticus 19). It is most important to understand the water baptism is not an innovation of the New Testament. Israel practiced many baptisms for fifteen hundred years before New Testament times.
  - Mark 7:1-9—the traditional baptisms of the Jews that were not required by the law.
  - John 1:31, Luke 3:3—John’s baptism for entrance into the Little Flock.
  - Matthew 3:5—the baptism of Christ by John
  - Acts 2:38, Mark 1—the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
- The immediate context is spiritual in nature; there is no suggestion that it is dealing with physical water baptism. The baptism here in Galatians 3:27 is talking about our spiritual baptism into Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit.
  - I Corinthians 12:13—the moment one believes on Jesus Christ as their savior he/she is identified with the Body of Christ, he or she is placed into the Church, through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.
  - This baptism is a once for all transaction through which believers are made members of the Church, in which position they are sealed and secured unto the day of redemption.
  - *“put on Christ.”*
  - Not only have we been made children of God in verse twenty six but here in verse twenty seven it says that we have “put on Christ.”
  - The word “put on,” means to invest with clothing. In other words, we are clothed and suited with Christ.
  - Romans 13:14—it is this clothing in Christ which allows us to live the Christian life.

### **Galatians 3:28**

- *“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.”*
- Those who have been baptized into Christ and who have been clothed in Christ lose their physical distinctions in the Body of Christ. By means of baptism by the Holy Spirit all believers out of all races and both sexes, regardless of who they are, lose their physical identity and are placed into the Body of Christ.
- II Corinthians 5:16-17—this new creature is one where all physical distinctions have been obliterated. This is course does not mean that men are not men and women and not women.
- This verse is only true if God changed the way in which he was dealing with mankind.

- Ephesians 2:11-12—in “time past” all of God’s dealings with humanity depended upon whether you were a member of the nation of Israel.

### **Galatians 3:29**

- *“And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”*
- When we finally reach the last verse of the chapter we see the point Paul has been driving at the entire time. The man who exercises faith in Christ receives justification, righteousness, eternal life, and the Holy Spirit as part of a spiritual inheritance that began with Abraham’s imputed righteousness in Genesis 15.
- We are Abraham’s spiritual seed because the seed of verse sixteen was Christ. In Christ, believes are one Spirit and one Spirit put them into Christ apart from water baptism or heathen sacraments. If you are in Christ, you are entitled to the spiritual promises that God gave to Abraham. The Body of Christ are the spiritual seed of Abraham.