

Galatians Chapter 3 (Part 1)

by Chip Brogden

The secret of the Christian life is to be crucified with Christ and to have Christ live in us, conforming us to his image.

Duration: 32:55

Scripture: Genesis 15:6, Matthew 6:33, Galatians 2:20, Galatians 3:5, Galatians 3:17, Colossians 2:3, Hebrews 12:2

Topics: "Expositional"

Description

In this video, Chip Brogdon continues his study in the book of Galatians. He begins by discussing the concept of true freedom in Christ, which is the ability to choose not to do things that may be permissible but not beneficial. He then moves on to Galatians chapter 3, where Paul admonishes the Galatians for being distracted from the simplicity of Christ and being bewitched into following other teachings. The video ends with a call to focus on Jesus Christ and his crucifixion as the foundation of our faith.

Transcript

...voice and be glad in it. Hello again everyone, this is Chip Brogdon welcoming you to another edition of our webcast. We're streaming online at www.watchman.net and we are continuing our study in the book of Galatians.

Last week we left off with Galatians chapter 2 verse 20 and this week we want to pick up right where we left off and proceed on through the third chapter of Galatians. So if you would grab your Bible and turn with me to Galatians chapter 2. We'll begin reading in verse 20 and why don't we go to the Lord in prayer right now. We thank you Father for your word and we thank you Lord for the many people who are listening around the world by way of the internet and thank you Father that we have this opportunity to come together and to study your word and to discuss the things concerning Jesus Christ.

Holy Spirit open our eyes, open our minds, open the eyes of our understanding and our heart that we may hear what the Spirit is saying to us and that we may learn the lessons that you want us to learn today in your word. Thank you Father for opening and revealing your son to us as we study the scriptures together and we thank you Lord for watching over your word to perform it and may Christ be increased as we study the word of God here in Galatians together. Thank you Father in Jesus name.

Amen. Praise the Lord. Well Galatians chapter 2 we left off last week with verse 20.

What a powerful verse this is. Paul tells us the secret of the Christian life. He says I have been crucified with Christ and it's no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me.

Not I but Christ and that my friends is the goal of the cross of Christ as well as the goal of the Holy Spirit is to get less of you and more of Jesus. The Christian life is not trying to make you better it's trying to get you out of the way all together so that it is no longer you who live but it is Christ who lives in you and of course that does not mean that you are obliterated all together but it means conformed to the image of Christ, made into his likeness, made into his image so that his character begins to be displayed and is seen and manifests through you and through me as we are submitted to his cross. The cross is going about the negative work of decreasing ourselves, our self-life and the Holy Spirit is going about the positive work of increasing Christ and enlarging him.

As he is increased we are decreased and Paul sums that up for us here with Galatians 2.20. I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live but Christ lives in me. Now obviously Paul did not stop living, that is not what he means. He means that my life now is the life of the Son of God.

I have given myself over to him and I no longer live. What is he saying? I no longer live for myself. I no longer live for my will.

I no longer live for my own desire and my own way. Instead I have given my life over to another who lives through me and lives in me and it is his will and his purpose that I am submitted to. So that is the secret of the Christian life.

That is the secret of discipleship. It is God's purpose for all, for disciples, for the church, for all of creation. I have been crucified with Christ and it is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God who loved me and gave himself for me.

That is Galatians 2.20. Then verse 21 Paul says I do not set aside the grace of God for if righteousness comes through the law then Christ died in vain. Now that is a critical statement here because remember we are contrasting here in this study of Galatians the difference between works and faith. Between keeping the law or having Christ and the two are completely separate, completely opposite.

As you have already seen hopefully and as we continue to see throughout the book of Galatians with Paul there is no middle ground. If you are going to keep the law then you have no part of Christ and if you are going to cling to Christ then you have no part of the law in so far as trying to be saved by works or even trying to please God and be justified by works. He basically says if righteousness could come through the law then there was no point in Christ having to die on the cross.

So when we insist on going back and keeping the works of the law or the letter of the law and we insist on going back to a system that regulates us outwardly then Paul says basically what you are doing is setting aside the grace of God and you are turning the cross of Christ into a meaningless thing. You are turning it into something that was unnecessary, something that was superfluous because if you could become righteous through the works of the law or through any other good work for that matter then what would be the point of Jesus Christ taking on the sins of the world and dying on the cross? So this is critical to our understanding and so many people are still trying to please God by the works of the law and it need not be the Old Testament law or it need not be Judaism or Hebrew roots. It could be your own law that you make up, your own religious law, your own traditions, your own expectations of how you think things need to be in order to please God.

It need not be something that is written in stone. It need not be something that is written in a book but it can be something that is written in your mind or something that is written in your heart that says this is what I must do to please God even if we do not try to be saved by our works. I am amazed at how many people once they are saved they begin to think well now I owe God something and now it is up to me to work and to labor and to do good and they begin to measure themselves by themselves.

They measure themselves by their outward works. Now being free from law does not mean that we cease to work. It does not mean we sit around just kind of passively basking in the freedom that is ours in Christ and we never do anything.

It is work but it is a different kind of work. It is not a work that brings us under the bondage of law, that brings us under the bondage of religion and religiosity. Instead it is a freedom but it is not freedom from the law of Christ.

The law, the spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. So friends you are always going to be under some kind of law but I would rather be under the law of the spirit of life in Christ because that is the law of liberty. That is the law of freedom.

You know freedom is not the ability to do whatever I want to do. Freedom is the ability not to do the things that I want to do. Not to do the things that I lust after and the things that my soul desires.

True freedom in Christ is the ability to say no to some things. The ability to say you know what I am free to do that but I choose not to do that. We will discuss that some more as we get into the close of Galatians.

Paul begins to talk about what it means to live by the spirit. To walk in the spirit and to produce fruit and that is a far different thing than to walk in the flesh and produce religious works of the flesh. Galatians chapter 3 and verse 1 he says, O foolish Galatians who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified.

See when you get away from Jesus Christ and him crucified it is very easy to be sidelined and be distracted into these other things. It is very easy to fall away from the simplicity of Christ and to think that there is some other thing that you need to be doing and if you are not doing it then you are not pleasing God. For the Galatians it was circumcision.

For some of you it may be tithing. For some of you it may be church attendance. For some of you it may be I don't know submission to authority.

Whatever the thing is if you are not careful in your zeal to please God in your zeal to perform these works and do these things that you feel like you are obligated to do often it is not God who is requiring something of you it is man that is requiring something of you. So the freedom that we have in Christ number one is freedom not to be obligated to be man pleasers. Remember in Galatians 1 Paul says I am not a man pleaser.

This gospel that I preach did not come from man. I did not receive it from man. It came by the revelation of Christ and at that moment on folks he was free from trying to please other people.

And a lot of times we are brought into bondage simply because we are afraid of other people. We are afraid of the pastor. We are afraid of the priest.

We are afraid of other Christians other believers who have been around longer than we have and they say you need to go back and do this and you need to behave a certain way. You need to wear your clothes in a certain way and you need to do this don't do that. Start doing this stop doing that.

And you know it is very easy for Jesus to get lost in the midst of all that religiosity in the midst of all that religious outward appearance when that focus is on what we look like on the outside. It is very easy for us to become distracted. Paul says you Galatians are foolish you can be witch and I am afraid that a lot of people are in the same situation here as the Galatians.

Now Paul asked them a question verse 2 this only I want to learn from you he says did you receive the spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith? Now that is a good question. See in the New Testament whenever they preach the gospel of Christ and people believe the Holy Spirit came and filled them and baptized them with that presence of Jesus that is the promise of the Father and the Holy Spirit would come and fill them. Well Paul says look were you filled with the spirit because I came and preached the mosaic law to you or were you filled with the spirit when I came and preached Jesus to you? When I preached the faith that comes by hearing when I preached the belief in Christ for salvation that is when you were filled with the spirit that was God's evidence of approval on the message as well as on his acceptance of you on the basis of faith and on the basis of grace not on the basis of law.

See it was only afterwards when all these people Paul called them false brothers when all these false brothers from Jerusalem came up to the Galatians and said you need to be circumcised you need to begin to obey the Jewish customs and the Jewish traditions. In other words it is okay to have Jesus but you also need this Jesus plus. Well you know what I have learned that Jesus is sufficient all by himself I believe that Jesus is enough and the law is fulfilled in Jesus and if you will seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness all these things will be added to you.

You are not going to offend God in the least if you promote the increase of Christ and if you just stick with the simplicity of Christ you are not missing out on a single thing God has for you if you make Christ all in all. So Paul asked them how did you receive the spirit? Did you receive the spirit because you obeyed the law or did you receive the spirit because you listened and you believed and you had faith in Christ? Now are you so foolish verse 3 having begun in the spirit are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

In other words you started out with the spirit now do you think that you are going to carry it through to completion and to perfection and to maturity by the works of the flesh? So how can you begin in the spirit and try to finish in the flesh and see that is exactly what we are doing when we start out by the spirit of God by the simplicity of Jesus and then we take that and we try to add to that and we try to improve upon that and we try to make ourselves spiritual and we try to make ourselves holy and religious and knowledgeable and you know there is so much information on the internet and so many little groups that want to come and teach you their own little spin on God and on spirituality and on the mosaic law and on our Hebrew roots and folks I will just go ahead and tell you because I am not a man pleaser that I don't have any Hebrew roots.

My roots go back to Jesus my roots begin in Galatians 2.20 where Paul says I have been crucified with Christ that is where my life began my life did not begin with Moses it didn't begin in the Old Testament my life began when I was crucified with Christ and so Christ is my inheritance he is the only thing worthy of study he is the only thing worthy of devotion to and everything else as we will learn later on in this chapter three is designed to point us to Jesus not take the place of Jesus and not add to Jesus see and we will get

into that as we go along but I make that statement because I get email from time to time from people who are just emphatic that we need to keep the Jewish religions the Jewish religious traditions we need to keep the Passover we need to keep the feast well I

agree that we should study them and we should understand their purpose and their place and nothing wrong with that but you cannot observe them in the New Testament if you are going to live as a New Testament spirit filled born again believer in Christ as a king and priest in his kingdom you cannot take a step backwards into the Old Testament and to begin living out of that you know that is just like wearing a coat in the middle of summer you know God works according to times and seasons and there was a time and a season for that but that time and that season is not now now Jesus is the mediator of a new covenant of a better covenant established upon better promises Hebrew says and God's work is on the inside of a person not on the outside so I am not about to step back 4000 years into

history into what God was doing back then when we have the fullness of Christ today and we are kings and priests in his kingdom today and we have an opportunity to live out of him and not be not be bound to the law of sin and death which is exactly what Paul calls that Old Testament the law of sin and death and we will find out more about that as we go on so let's proceed on verse 4 have you suffered so many things in vain if indeed it was in vain therefore he verse 5 he who supplies the spirit to you and works miracles among you does he do it by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith same question same argument again does God pour out his spirit on people because they perform the works of the law or because they believe on Christ by and are saved by grace through faith that this

is Paul's entire argument here now verse 6 just as Abraham it says he's quoting now from from Genesis 15 6 just as Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness see Paul is going back to Abraham not to Moses but back to Abraham to demonstrate that it is belief in faith in God which makes someone righteous and he's going to connect that here in a moment to belief in Christ verse 7 now this is a powerful statement therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham so you remember in John chapter 8 where Jesus was speaking to the Jews and they said that Abraham is our father and Jesus said no because if Abraham were your father you would not try to kill me a man who told you the truth that he heard from God he says instead you were of your father the

devil so what is what is Paul saying basically the same thing that someone is a son of Abraham not because they are Jewish and because they keep the Hebrew law they are sons of Abraham through faith now Galatians is one of the oldest or is one of the oldest letters because it's one of the first ones or the first one that Paul wrote he elaborates on this more extensively in his letter to the Romans but here in Galatians you see the beginning of his understanding into the difference between faith in Christ versus faith in the old Jewish system of law and so he's going back here to Abraham therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham verse 8 in the scripture for seeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith preach the gospel to Abraham beforehand saying in you

all the nations shall be blessed so then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham now verse 10 for as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse for it is written cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them that's a quote from Deuteronomy 27 26 cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them see and that's another point that needs to be witnessed here Paul is saying circumcision is not the only thing that you're going to be obligated to you are obligated when you put yourself under the law to obey all of the commands of the law all the commands not just the ones that you

know about not just the ones that make sense the ones that you can

grasp and right now I have in mind tithing because today the debate is really not so much about circumcision but you talk about tithing that is another part of the old testament mosaic law and people want to try to bring people other people into bondage to this tithe which is an old testament facet of the law now the other thing that now tithing actually didn't begin with the law there was a principle of the tithe as far back as Melchizedek and Abraham but my point is they'll use old testament law to try to establish something that Christians ought to be doing today which is paying a tithe well here's a good question that you need to ask does a church when they teach tithing do they also teach that you should stone children who disobey and are irreverent towards their parents I can't find

a church right now that has ever taught that or plans to teach that in the near future but there are churches right now I get newsletters from churches once a month and every month they're talking about tithing tithing tithing well why don't they talk about stoning children or stoning people who commit adultery why don't they write a series of articles on the evils of eating seafood all of these are old testament laws and again they had a purpose and they served a purpose for that time and that season that God was using them but to suggest that now we who are free in Christ are supposed to go back and observe one or two or three points of that old testament law Paul says it's to put you under a curse because you have to obey all of the law not just one and if you're guilty in one you're

guilty in all see you can't win under law and that's that's the whole point verse 11 no one is justified by the law in the sight of God it's evident for the just shall live by faith and that's a quote from Habakkuk 2 4 Paul says no one is justified by the law in the sight of God that's why back in chapter two he says that I through the law died to the law that I might live to God so really there's only two kinds of people there are people who are dead to the law because they are alive to God in Christ and there are people who are dead to God because they are alive to the law now so you can't have it both ways you've got to decide if you're going to be under the law or under grace and the people who really teach this have gotten pretty smart here recently because now they're saying well we

don't we don't teach people that the law can save you but certainly after you're saved you should keep the law in order to please God well according to Paul there's no such thing as pleasing God by way of the law if you really want to please God you just need to give up the law and embrace the law the spirit of life in Christ if you will if you will give Christ the preeminence and understand that he is the high priest of a new covenant and come to terms meet him there in in that covenant and under his conditions and not your own and not go back into the Old Testament and try to put yourself under a yoke of bondage under a curse Paul says then you'll be pleasing God God's not looking for you to obey him in the letter of the law he is looking to govern you from within he is looking for a

heart and a soul that is submitted to him and is submitted to his purpose in Christ and gives Jesus the preeminence in all things no one is justified by the law Paul says in verse 12 yet the law is not of faith but the man who does them shall live by them say he's contrasting faith with works the just shall live by faith but if you're going to live by the law you'll be judged by your works and only only people who don't know any better think that they can please God under the law because what the experience of thousands and millions of people has shown is that the law cannot produce righteousness so and again that's the whole point folks if the law could produce righteousness in a person there's then there's no point in Christ coming to die when in fact the law was given to demonstrate

just the opposite that you can't keep it you can't come to God on the basis of good works and that is the entire reason for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ praise the Lord see I'm not trying to I'm not trying to get down on the law as much as I'm trying to exalt Jesus let's exalt Christ let's increase him and let's give him the honor and the glory that's due to him and when we do we'll see that we are under a superior covenant and a much better covenant and that the Lord himself is our high priest and is working and living in us and through us both to will and to do of his good pleasure and it's not based on some outward observance to a ritual or ceremony and it need again it need not be straight out of the Old Testament it could be a religious tradition Jesus says you nullify the word of

God because of your traditions we've got traditions about where we're supposed to go to church and how often we're supposed to go and what we're supposed to do when we get there and who's supposed to be in charge and what we're supposed to do and what we're not supposed to do and every denomination is based on some nuance of their own little law that they have created unto themselves about this is the way we're supposed to act but folks none of that has anything to do with faith in Christ and that's what Paul is trying to teach the Galatians here and hopefully that's what we're trying to convey as well verse 13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law having become a curse for us for it is written curse is everyone who hangs on a tree curse is everyone who hangs on a tree verse 14

that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith see it's just a completely different reality a completely different time and season that we are living in as opposed to the Old Testament verse 15 brethren I speak in the manner of men and he's going to give us an example here from everyday life though it is only a man's covenant yet if it is confirmed no one annuls or adds to it and what does that mean well that means let's say for example I make a last will and testament once I sign that and once I seal that and it is confirmed you can't go back and change it just as a matter of your personal convenience even a man's covenant once it is put in writing and sealed it is a done deal okay now verse 16 now

to Abraham and his seed were the promises made now he's going to talk about a covenant that was made by God a promise that was made by God that cannot be annulled that cannot be undone that cannot be void now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made he does not say and to seeds as of many but as of one and to your seed who is Christ now that that is a powerful powerful insight and is probably going to go over most people's heads right now but the point here that Paul is making is when Abraham when God to Abraham said I'm going to bless you and your seed and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed he was not talking about Israel folks he was talking about Jesus Christ because he did not say to seeds as of many or as plural or as more than one but to one seed and to your seed

verse 16 to your seed and Paul says seed there means Christ it is through Christ that all the nations in this world will be blessed now obviously Israel had a part to play and does have a part to play in that but God's purpose has never been Israel God's purpose has never been the church the church as well as Israel have only been instruments in God's purpose but what is God's purpose God's purpose is to bless all the nations through Christ through Christ see it's all about Jesus it's all about him it's not about Israel it's not about the church that's not where the blessing is the blessing is in Christ in him are all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge in him we have been blessed with every spiritual blessing and that's what Paul is pointing out here verse 17 in this I say that the law

which was 430 years later cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ that it should make the promise of no effect for if the inheritance is of the law it is no longer a promise but God

gave it to Abraham by promise and what is he saying there he's saying I'm going to bless all of the nations through Christ and just because 430 years later the Mosaic covenant was given that does not annul or discount or disqualify or eradicate or erase what God had already said to Abraham that it is through faith and through faith alone that all nations will be blessed because of your seed who is Christ praise the Lord well see that raises an interesting question then what is the purpose of the law why would God give the law if his real purpose all along is Christ why not just

bring Christ forth why have the law at all well that's a good point and Paul's going to answer that as we go on into verse 19 but we're all out of time for this week so we're going to have to stop it right there but I encourage you to keep reading and keep meditating in these passages very powerful powerful passages of scripture and if you will really get into them and pray through them it will set you free whether your bondage whatever flavor your bondage is whether it's religion or spirituality or Hebrew roots or Judaism or New Age whatever it happens to be in here is something that is superior to all of them and we have this exceeding great and precious promise that is fulfilled in Jesus Christ the author and the finisher of our faith praise the Lord we'll leave it there for now and

we'll pick up here again next week this is Chip Brogdon streaming online at www.watchman.net thank you for being with us this week and we look forward to seeing you again next week as we continue to study in the book of Galatians God bless you

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