Review

• Written fairly early (around 49)
• Paul wrote to churches he founded
• Threat of the return of legalistic religion
• Paul wrote to discredit legalistic religion, re-establish the truth and his authority, and call believers to faith and freedom in Christ.
• The Church today can learn much from this book, as we continue to embrace freedom!

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So far in Galatians...

• Paul was re-establishing the gospel in Galatia
• There was a difference between Paul and the other Apostles – his relationship with Jerusalem.
  – Jerusalem approved him for the Gentile mission
• We are saved by faith, not by the law. If we know the truth, we cannot return to old ways.

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FIRST IMPRESSIONS...
Outline

• First argument...
  1. The Argument... (3:1-4:7)
  2. The Application... (4:8-11)
  3. The Appeal... (4:12-20)
You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed as crucified. 2 I 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? 3 Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?
Appeal to Their Experience (3:1-6)

- “foolish”...“Who has bewitched you?”
  - Tying together the story of rejecting the truth by returning to old ways ...the ultimate truth: by rejecting the truth, we reject Christ.

- Observing or believing? (Learning or Experiencing?)

- Once knew the truth of the Spirit, now trying to do it in the flesh.

- Life in the Spirit = adoption
  Works of the law = slavery
4 Have you experienced[b] so much in vain—if it really was in vain? 5 So 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? 6 So also Abraham “believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness.”

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7 Understand, then, that those who have faith are *children of Abraham*. 8 Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: “All nations will be blessed through you.”\(^a\) 9 So those who rely on faith are blessed along with Abraham, the man of faith.

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• Is this in vain? To return to the works of the law is to return to life in the flesh.

• Abraham as Paul’s reference...
  – Genesis 15:6
  – James 2:21-23

• Read James and Paul together:
  – Believing in Christ results in adoption and freedom, which results in living in the Spirit, which results in doing good deeds, which points to Christ in us.

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Who are Abraham’s True Children
(3:7-14)

10 For all who rely on the works of the law are under a curse, as it is written: “Cursed is everyone who does not continue to do everything written in the Book of the Law.”[b]

11 Clearly no one who relies on the law is justified before God, because “the righteous will live by faith.”[c] 12 The law is not based on faith; on the contrary, it says, “The person who does these things will live by them.”

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Who are Abraham’s True Children (3:7-14)

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: “Cursed is everyone who is hung on a pole.”[e]

14 He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.
Who are Abraham’s True Children (3:7-14)

- Abraham – it was always about the HEART
- The righteous first live by faith, the law is a relational book helping us to live out our faith
- Those who live by faith, are part of Abraham’s family and are adopted into freedom
- The Gentiles (us) are given the opportunity of joining the family through the cross of Christ.
15 Brothers and sisters, let me take an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or add to a human covenant that has been duly established, so it is in this case.

16 The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say “and to seeds,” meaning many people, but “and to your seed,”[a] meaning one person, who is Christ.
What I mean is this: The law, introduced 430 years later, does not set aside the covenant previously established by God and thus do away with the promise. For if the inheritance depends on the law, then it no longer depends on the promise; but God in his grace gave it to Abraham through a promise.

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The Law Does Not Void The Promise (3:15-18)

• “Covenant” (“will”)
  – The Promise
    • Couldn’t be altered in any way. The true heir of the promise being Christ, and us through Him.
    • Gentiles (us) become Abraham’s seed through Christ
  – The Law
    • Coming 430 years later

• The Promise came before the Law, and therefore giving precedent over the Law
Why, then, was the law given at all? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was given through angels and entrusted to a mediator. A mediator, however, implies more than one party; but God is one.
21 Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. 22 But Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe.
• So what about the law?
  – There’s nothing bad about the law, but it was never meant to replace the promise.
• A Band-Aid
  – Temporary relief from sin’s bondage until the Seed (Christ) came.
• If righteousness could have been established by the law, then it would be so... But it’s not. Righteousness is found in the belief of the promise.
1st Conclusion: Those in Christ are Abraham’s seed (3:23-29)

23 Before 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. 24 So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. 25 Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.
1st Conclusion: Those in Christ are Abraham’s seed (3:23-29)

26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.
1st Conclusion: Those in Christ are Abraham’s seed (3:23-29)

• We are sinful people; held captive by sin
• The law was humanity’s guardian until Christ – the ultimate seed of Abraham
• We need to be “justified” – being set right before God. (before Christ – Law; after Christ – Faith)
  – Abraham believed and was declared righteous. (Gen 15:6)
• Together as ONE.

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

• Experience of the Spirit and faith was how it started – are we to continue? Or return to law?
• Abraham believed (Gen 15:6)
• The promise given to Abraham which cannot be changed
• The Law is many years later (a band-aid to help)
• Christ is the key to salvation – He is the ultimate seed of Abraham.
• The only way to receive, is through faith
• Gentile believers (us) are among Abraham’s heirs
• We are a family, “clothed in Christ.”

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1. Paul talks about the experience of the Holy Spirit. (Gal 3:2-5)
   – Receiving the Spirit
   – Maturity in the Spirit
   – Miracles in the Spirit

   Through these experiences, how can a believer know that he/she has been saved by faith?
2. Why do you think the road God’s grace and faith is so much less traveled than the road of works?
3. Why did Paul put the word *seed* into a messianic context? What are the implications of this seed for the Jews? For the Gentiles (us)?

Why is it so important for us that God’s original promise is still in effect?
QUESTIONS...

4. What does it mean to be “clothed in Christ” and are we truly experiencing that today? Are we a family?