

WRITE IT DOWN!

Performance or Promise?

Getting Grace: A Study in Galatians

Galatians 3:13-18

Sunday, May 4, 2008

LISTEN UP!

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- I. **The CONFIRMATION of the Promise Covenant (3:15-18)**
 - A promise covenant initiated by God. (Gen. 12, 15)
 - A promise covenant ratified by only God. (Gen. 15, 17)
 - A promise covenant without conditions received by faith.
- II. **The CHRONOLOGY of the Promise Covenant (3:17)**
 - The promise covenant was given long before the Law.
 - The promise covenant was not invalidated, nullified or amended by the Law.
- III. **The COMPLETENESS of the Promise Covenant (3:18)**
 - The nature of a promise . . .
 - The basis of an inheritance . . .
 - The God who “grants” by His grace . . .
- IV. **The CHRIST-CENTEREDNESS of the Promise Covenant (3:16)**

Christ is the true and better SEED of Abraham in 5 senses:

 1. He is a literal, physical descendant of Abraham.
 2. He lived a life of faith like Abraham. (Gal. 3:7)
 3. He perfectly kept the law of the later Mosaic Covenant. (Gal. 3:13)
 4. He is the better Isaac, the Son Sacrificed who died for sin to purchase the blessings of Abraham for all who believe. (Gen. 22)
 5. Only in Him, are all the peoples of the earth saved through faith. (Gal. 3:8)

THINK IT OVER!

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1. Read Galatians 3:1-18 from the top again. Recap the arguments that Paul is making for the Gospel of grace in contrast to the Law. Is this making sense to you? Are you remembering the things we are talking about?
2. When Paul talks about these “promises” in 3:16, which he also calls a “covenant” in verse 17, what is he talking about? (Hint: Look back to 3:8)
3. In Galatians 3:15-18, to what is Paul comparing the “promise covenant?” What word in 3:18 helps us understand this? What is the point of the comparison?
4. Does Paul in 3:15-18 tell us how the law IS or how the law IS NOT related to the promise covenant? What point is he making in 3:17?
5. Think about inheritance. What are the conditions of inheritance? Is inheritance based on performance or promise? What point is Paul making in 3:18?
6. Explain this statement: As the true and better SEED of Abraham, Christ is both the focus of and fulfillment of all God’s promises.

WORK IT OUT!

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1. What was new and most challenging for you in the text/message this week and why?
2. Explain this statement: “There are two ways to read the Bible. Either the Bible is all about us . . . what we must do. . . OR the Bible is all about Jesus. . . what God has done for us in Jesus.” Which way does a moralistic, legalistic religious person read the Bible? Which way does a Gospel-centered person read the Bible? Which way does Paul read the Bible?
3. Read through Galatians 3 & 4 and circle all the occurrences of “promise” and its derivatives. How many did you come up with? Is “promise” contrasted with other things? What things? What’s your take-away?
4. Why is our default tendency to run back to our own performance instead of casting ourselves and resting on God’s promises in Christ?
5. How does Galatians 3:29 relate to our study this week, especially if we understand that “descendants” is really “Seed”?

Sermon Stuff for Young People

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INTENDED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 3 and up . . .

1. How many times do you see the word “promise” or “promises” in Galatians 3:15-18?
2. There are three parties mentioned in 3:15-18. Who are they?
3. What is an inheritance? Is an inheritance something you earn or something you’re given?

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INTENDED FOR YOUNG PEOPLE AGES 7 AND UP, FOR USE WITH THE ADULT OUTLINE

1. What are the two ways to read the Bible? Is the Bible a book of rules or a book of redemption? What’s the difference?
2. Who is the true and better Seed of Abraham? Which verse tells us? What was spoken to this Seed?
3. How many years before the law were the promises to Abraham given?
4. Logically, why can Law not be added as a condition of a promise?

