**BCM Bible Study – March 29-30, 2023**

**Galatians 3:1-22: Salvation Through Faith: An Explanation to the Purpose of the Law**

Paul begins his rebuke of the Galatians by confronting their false beliefs, specifically that they are being made “perfect by the flesh” (Gal. 3:3). He goes on to trace back the promise of salvation to Abraham, explaining how the Galatians (and us) fit into this promise. He then proceeds to describe the function and purpose of the Law to those of us that belong to the King.

**Read Galatians 3:1-9**

* What are your immediate impressions of Paul’s words in the opening verses of chapter 3? What impact would this have had on the Galatians?
  + There are only three other instances in scripture where Paul directly addresses his audience by name. What is the significance of this?
* Even though we say we are saved by grace through faith, we may often find ourselves trying to pursue righteousness through the flesh and on our own accord. Do you find this true for you?
  + What are some ways we can practice not measuring our salvation by works?
* Do you find yourself implicitly or explicitly believing that God still judges us under the Law? What are some specific examples where you have seen yourself do this?
  + What would it look like if we regularly thought that the Holy Spirit is supplied to us by God? How could this change our outlook on life circumstances?
* **Really focus on verses 6-8.** Why does Paul bring up Abraham in his argument?
  + What does Paul mean by “sons of Abraham”? *(To call back to the original Promise and further establish credibility of Scripture. Demonstrates Paul’s knowledge of OT).*
* How does verse 8 resonate with you? (The idea that God extends salvation to the Gentiles).
  + We are taught that Abraham was an extremely important Jewish figure. Does it seem strange to think that we as Christians can take part in the promise God gave him?

**Read Galatians 3:10-18**

Paul asserts that we are all under the curse and are unable to uphold the Law. However, we shouldn’t let this discourage us from striving to be Christ-like.

* **Read verses 11-13 again.** What does Paul say is our duty in relation to the Law? *(Christ buckled down on the Law, and though we are saved, we are called to uphold it to the best of our ability).* 
  + **Read Romans 1:16-17, 10:1-9.** Do you find yourself thinking of Christ as the culmination of the Law? Take some time to ponder this. *(Discuss what resonated with you during this time of thought).*
* \*In verse 16 we see the fulfillment of a prophecy (Genesis 12:7). \*
* Paul refers to Christ as the “Seed” of Abraham, and God’s infinite foresight is clearly shown here. How could this have corrected the Galatians?
  + How does this encourage you, especially in times where you don’t know what the future holds?
* In verse 18, Paul writes that if the inheritance of salvation is of the Law, then it is no longer of promise. How do you think the Galatians would have taken that? How do you take it? *(Refer to Galatians 2:21).*

**Read Galatians 3:19-22**

* Sin is sin. Sinning even though we know it’s wrong is transgression. **Read Romans 4:14-15.**
  + How does this condemnation by the Law amplify the deeds of Christ?
  + What does it look like to live in the knowledge of this freedom?

**Note**: The mediator mentioned in verses 19-20 refer to Moses. Though the exact interpretation of these two verses is unclear, the most likely interpretation is that the exchange of the Law is between two parties (the mediator and the people), but the arrangement of the Promise involves “one” party (God). (Moo, pg. 236)

* Many times, we hear people say that the Old Testament and the Books of the Law are irrelevant. Why is this not the case?
  + How can we tell people about the importance of the Law without falling into the same trap as the Galatians?
* What would life look like if we were given a law that could give life and righteousness?
  + How does Christ alter that reality?

**Challenge**

This week, focus on your status as a descendent of Abraham, a son/daughter of God, and an heir to the promised inheritance. Meditate on this. When you pray, thank God for this incredible gift He’s given to us.

**Note:** The purpose of this challenge is to ultimately take time to stop and intentionally think about the Lord’s foresight. We are not Jews, so Jewish figures such as Moses and Abraham are of course never going to be as important to us as Jesus Christ. However, these figures are still very important to the story of God and therefore should be important to us. In saying this, we should not place Abraham or Moses on a pedestal and nowhere near the level of God. Instead, we should look at them as characters through which God was glorified. In the context of Galatians, we should certainly see Abraham as important and view ourselves as descendants of Abraham, not because Abraham was a cool guy and worthy of worship, but because upon and through the lineage of Abraham, God provided a way of salvation. So, this challenge will hopefully make us all stop and think just how far down the line we are from Abraham, and therefore just how incredible God’s foresight and love for us is.