



LAW AND GOSPEL

Introduction:

“legalism” = the belief that we can make ourselves acceptable to God by keeping rules

“nomism” = the belief that we need to make law the ruling governor of our lives

I. PAUL’S HISTORICAL ARGUMENT (vs. 1-18)

A. Arguments from Experience (vs. 1-5) - six questions

B. Arguments from Scripture (vs. 6-14) - six quotes from the OT

Genesis 15:6 - Abraham “believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness”

Genesis 12:3 (c.f. 18:8; 22:18) - “all nations will be blessed in you”

Deuteronomy 27:26 - “cursed is everyone who does not abide all things written in the book of the law to perform them”

Habakkuk 2:4 - “the righteous man shall live by faith”

Leviticus 18:5 - “he who practices them shall live by them”

Deuteronomy 21:23 - “cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”

Note on Paul’s use of Scripture:

- dependence on what is written
- literal interpretation
- “letter-al” interpretation
- largely taken from LXX

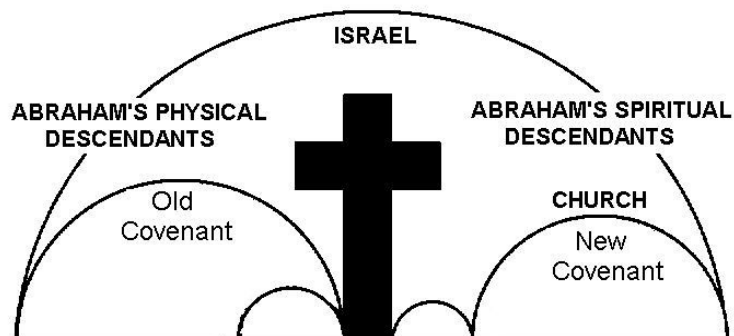
C. Arguments from Legal Practice (vs. 15-18) - three cases

covenant / contract

precedent & continuity

inheritance

ABRAHAM'S OFFSPRING



II. PAUL'S THEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT (vs. 19-25)

A. *What is the purpose of the law?* (review from last week)

- 1) to display the holiness of God and identify the standard of holiness required to have fellowship with Him
- 2) to identify sin
- 3) to bring conviction of sin and condemn sinners
- 4) to point man to the holiness of Messiah, our Savior
- 5) to motivate us to obedience

B. *What are the effects of the law?*

- 1) it brings a curse (Galatians 3:10-12)
- 2) it brings death (II Corinthians 3:6-7; Romans 7:9-10)
- 3) it brings condemnation (II Corinthians 3:9)
- 4) it makes offenses abound (Romans 5:10; 7:7-13)
- 5) it declares all men guilty (Romans 3:19)
- 6) it holds men in bondage to sin and death (Galatians 4:3-5, 9, 24; Romans 7:10-14)

C. *What can the law not do?*

- 1) justify (Galatians 2:16)
- 2) give life (Galatians 3:21)
- 3) give the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:2, 14)
- 4) give spirituality (Galatians 3:21; 5:5; Romans 8:3)
- 5) make perfect or permanently deal with sin (Hebrews 7:19)

Conclusion: So what?

"If we learn to read the Bible *down* (into our hearts), *across* (the plot line of Scripture), *out* (to the end of the story), and *up* (to the glory of God...), we will find that every bit of the Bible is profitable for us."

Kevin DeYoung, *Taking God at His Word* (p. 54)

Food for Thought:

- 1) What was the issue with the Judaizers in Galatia and how does it relate to us today?
- 2) What should we learn from Paul's use of Scripture in this passage?
- 3) In what sense is Abraham "our father" even if we're not born Jewish?
- 4) Why is the concept of approaching God by keeping the Law incompatible with "the righteousness that comes by faith?"