

Study 6
Galatians 3:6-18

1. The gospel is about salvation by faith in Christ alone without the requirement of the law to merit salvation. How is this a threat to Jews and caused persecution by the Jews wherever Paul preached?

The message of salvation by faith alone without the necessity of observing the law directly contradicted the Jewish understanding of righteousness, which was centered on works and adherence to the Mosaic Law.

For the Jewish leaders, this was a threat to their identity and religious authority, and as a result, Paul faced persecution because his gospel undermined their traditional system of salvation through works and rituals.

2. Why does Paul bring in the story of Abraham to bolster his claim that salvation is by faith in Christ alone?

Paul uses the story of Abraham to demonstrate that righteousness was credited to him at the moment he believed God's promise, as recorded in Genesis 15:6, rather than through any human act of obedience. This pivotal moment shows that justification has always been by faith and not by works, long before the law was given. By highlighting Abraham's experience, Paul reinforces that salvation is a gift received through trusting in God's promise, a principle fulfilled in Christ.

3. In what way are we "sons" of Abraham if we are not descended from the Jews

In ancient culture the term "son" is more than physical descent it is about reflecting behaviour, who the father is and what his life is about. We are considered "sons" of Abraham not by physical descent, but by faith. Just as Abraham was justified by faith, those who place their faith in Christ share in the spiritual lineage of Abraham. In this way, all believers—whether Jew or Gentile—are heirs to the promises given to Abraham because of their faith in Jesus. It is faith just trusting God that makes us sons.

4. What is the problem of relying on obedience to the Law as a means of salvation? Gal 3:10; James 2:10. How is the Law and faith incompatible?

The problem with relying on the Law is that it demands perfect obedience, and even breaking one commandment means breaking the whole law (James 2:10).

Since no one can perfectly obey the law, it cannot justify us. The law shows us our sin but cannot save us. Faith, on the other hand, is a trusting reliance on Christ's completed work, not on our own efforts, making faith and the law incompatible as means of salvation.

5. How does Christ save us from the curse of the Law? (Deut 21:22-23; Isaiah 53:5-11)

Christ saves us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us. Deuteronomy 21:22-23 reveals that anyone hung on a tree is cursed, and Jesus, by being crucified, took upon Himself the curse that we deserved.

Through His death, He bore our sins, fulfilling the prophecy in Isaiah that the Messiah would suffer for our iniquities, thus redeeming us from the curse of the law.

6. What was the use of animal sacrifices in the OT (Lev 16:21-22) if in the end they could not actually take away our sins (Heb 10:3-4)

Animal sacrifices in the Old Testament were symbolic acts instituted to remind the people of their sin and their need for atonement, serving as a recurring annual reminder of the consequences of sin.

While these sacrifices demonstrated obedience to God's commands, they were unable to permanently remove sin, as Hebrews explains. Instead, they pointed forward to the ultimate sacrifice of Jesus Christ, whose once-for-all atonement fulfills the need for continual offerings.

7. To whom were the covenantal promises to Abraham addressed to? How did the Jews misunderstand this? How do these promises benefit us today who are not physical descendants of Abraham?

The covenantal promises to Abraham were ultimately addressed to Christ, the one true heir, and through Him, to all who have faith. The Jews misunderstood these promises as being limited to physical descendants, but Paul teaches that the promises were always intended to include all who share Abraham's faith. Today, the promise of blessing through Abraham's seed—Christ—is available to all believers, whether Jew or Gentile, who put their faith in Jesus Christ.

Takeaway

The gospel is rooted in God's promise to Abraham, fulfilled in Christ, which offers salvation by faith and not by the law. This demonstrates that justification has always been by faith, and through Christ, the blessings of Abraham's covenant extend to all who believe, transcending ethnicity and works-based righteousness.