

Study 7
Galatians 3:19-29

1. The nature of the Law was that it was conditional on obedience whilst the Covenant was an unconditional provision by God to Abraham. The Judaisers claimed precedence as the law was given later. What was Paul saying about the relationship between the Law and the covenant?

2. If salvation was by faith all along what was the purpose of the Mosaic Law given 430 years after the Abrahamic covenant? Look at Gal 3:19 and what was Paul saying about the role of the Law if it was not to provide an alternative path to salvation?

3. Look at *Galatians 3:22 (ESV)*: *22 But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.* Paul uses another metaphor here to describe the role of the law, and this metaphor is now the "prison." How does this use of the prison imagery further illustrate the role of the law, and how does it facilitate faith in Christ?

4. In illustrating the role of the law, Paul switches to another metaphor: the law as a guardian for a child. How did the Law, in its civil, sacrificial, and moral components, actually act as a guardian for Israel, pointing towards the need for Christ when he eventually came?
5. a) Why has the coming of Jesus removed all barriers between people of different ethnic backgrounds, cultures, socioeconomic classes, and genders? Christianity is unique in this perspective, more so than other religions. For example, in Islam, there is a need to read the Koran in Arabic and assimilate one's culture into its expression.
- b) How can your church reflect this groundbreaking spiritual truth that we are all one in Christ?

6. a) Why is it important for the church to be multi-ethnic and what were the mistakes that prior Western missionaries had made in their missions to Asian nations?

b) What is the danger of a particular culture being associated with Christianity? Why is it important for every local church to adapt biblical truths and express them in their own culture? What is the danger in this process? What are the advantages?

7. Discussion Question. Can a Chinese Malaysian Christian celebrate Chinese New Year? What are the practices that in the light of Scripture will be helpful to reflect biblical values?

- Lou Sang
- Ang Pows
- Wishing someone Gong Xi Fa Cai
- Gift of mandarin oranges
- Used of firecrackers
- Visitation to relatives

How can we reconfigure these practices to have a more spiritual bent for the witness of the gospel?

Case History

Lawrence Thing attended a church where LGBTQ people were openly welcomed. He was willing to be open-minded as many of the members were young people and professionals and very well educated. The pastor said that it was based on *Galatians 3:28 (ESV) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*

He said that this was obvious proof that there were no longer any gender differences in the Christian faith. Hence if there were no more gender differences then there should be no problem with same-sex unions. This is proof that we should embrace all LGBTQ people in the church and accept their sexual activity without shame.

Look at the context of Galatians 3:23-29 and determine if the context of the argument that Paul is making here will support what the pastor is saying.

Takeaway

The law was given to reveal sin and point people toward faith in Christ, acting as a temporary guardian until Jesus fulfilled God's covenantal promises. Salvation comes through faith in Christ alone, not by obeying the law, and believers are united as God's children, free from the law's bondage, bringing spiritual maturity and true freedom.