

Was God's Law Abolished Part Two – Galatians

Context:

When Paul wrote to the Galatians, they were in turmoil and confusion because of different doctrines working their way into the church of God. Jews had come from Judea trying to convince Gentile members of the church to receive circumcision and keep the Jewish laws to be saved. (Galatians 5: 2-3) Recall that Jesus had condemned the Jews for all their traditions which they added to the Laws of God that were making His law void. (see Mark 7: 5- 9 below) Also, God's laws delivered through Moses were never intended for salvation from the penalty of sin which is death. Its purpose was to reveal sin and teach how to live righteously toward God and our neighbors. (see Romans 7: 7 and Matthew 22: 34-40) The animal sacrifices also did not save them from sin's penalty of death, for obedience to the sacrificial laws only covered their sins temporarily until the Messiah would come and be the ultimate sacrifice once and for all. These Jews were trying to bring in their corrupted form of Judaism into the church doctrine. Since they believed only Jews were God's chosen people and were saved by keeping the Jewish laws and God's commandments, they were telling the Gentiles that they needed to live and believe like them to be saved, so they believed the Gentiles could only have salvation by keeping the law even though the Jews themselves were not able to keep the whole law.

Mark 7 NKJV ⁵ Then the Pharisees and scribes asked Him, "Why do Your disciples not walk according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashed hands?" ⁶ He answered and said to them, "Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: 'This people honors Me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from Me. ⁷ And in vain they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' ⁸ For laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men—the washing of pitchers and cups, and many other such things you do." ⁹ He said to them, "*All too well you reject the commandment of God, that you may keep your tradition.*"

Galatians 3 NKJV ¹ O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? ² This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? ³ Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh? ⁴ Have you suffered so many things in vain—if indeed *it was* in vain? ¹⁹ What purpose then *does* the law *serve*? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed (*Jesus Christ*) should come to whom the promise was made; *and it was* appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator. ²⁰ Now a mediator does not *mediate* for one *only*, but God is one. ²¹ *Is* the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness (*or justification by God - drh*) would have been by the law. ²² But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. ²³ But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor (*spiritual guide & guardian from our sinful nature - drh*) to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵ But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. (*Converted Christians are no longer under the law requiring death because by having faith in God's word after hearing the Gospel, we believed that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God who took our place for that death requirement, we repented and turned away from our sins which the law (commandments) reveals in us, and we have asked for and have been given God's gift of undeserved forgiveness (God's Grace) and are now led by God's Holy Spirit usually received at baptism by the touching of hands and prayer by a spirit filled Christian minister. The Holy Spirit then guides us and leads us to understanding God's truth and plan of Salvation for mankind. drh*)

In addition to Jews trying to impose Jewish laws on members of the church, there were also Gentile members who were reverting back to paganism and some even accepting pagan traditions into the church. Some Gentiles in the church would certainly be confused and befuddled by all the different doctrines being pushed on the members, especially circumcision, so they found comfort by returning to the old pagan traditions they had known and lived with all their lives before Paul brought the truth of salvation through Christ to them. drh

Galations 4 NKJV ⁸ But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. *(Paul is speaking to the Greek Gentiles pointing out how they worshiped pagan gods and idols before they came to Christ. He is not speaking about the Jewish members because they had been brought up knowing God.-drh)* ⁹ But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? ¹⁰ You observe days and months and seasons and years. *(pagans observed all of these times such as the day of Sunday for the sun god, Monday for the moon, Thursday for the Norse god Thor etc., and months of the year such as January for Janus the Roman god of beginnings and endings, February for a Roman purification festival called februa, which literally means "month of cleansing", March is named after Mars, the Roman god of war because the weather was mild enough to begin waging war, July and August were observed as emperor god worship for Julius and Augustus Ceasar, etc. The pagan seasonal cycle, also known as the Wheel of the Year, is based on ancient seasonal and celestial events. And finally the yearly observance of Yule is a key part of the life cycle of the 'Child of Promise', conceived in Ostara and born in the winter solstice as the 'Sun Child' who will defeat the powers of darkness in the coming spring, ushering in nature's triumphant return.- drh)* *(Therefore Paul said to the Gentiles in the church in verse 11):* ¹¹ I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.

Galations 5 NKJV ¹ Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. *(Paul is telling the Gentiles that they should hold fast to the doctrine that faith in Christ's sacrifice alone justified them to God, not the law, including circumcision. God's forgiveness of their sins made them free from the **yoke of bondage to sin and death** which they had turned away from when converted. Paul is certainly not saying they are free from obeying God's law and His commandments. Disobedience to the Ten Commandments would obviously lead to our peril. See Romans 7: 7 & 12 below and 1 Corinthians 6: 9 below - drh)* ² Indeed I, Paul, say to you that if you become circumcised, Christ will profit you nothing. ³ And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. *(If you believe you must be circumcised to be justified by God then you must keep the whole law to be justified which in reality is not possible for us while in flesh bodies. Only Jesus was able to do that. drh)* ⁴ You have become estranged from Christ, you who *attempt* to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. ⁵ For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. ⁶ For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.

Romans 7 NKJV ⁷ What shall we say then? *Is the law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary, I would not have known sin except through the law. For I would not have known covetousness unless the law had said, "You shall not covet." (God's commandments reveal to us what sin is, what God's character is and how to live a life that is pleasing to Him. To be under the law means you are still living in sin therefore you are in bondage to sin and subject to the penalty of sin which is death. To be under Grace means you*

have repented of what you know from the commandments to be sin, sincerely asked God for forgiveness and turned away from it in your life. drh)

Romans 7:12 NKJV ¹² Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good.

MORE SCRIPTURES CLARIFYING SIN, THE LAW AND GRACE

1 John 3: 4-10 KJV ⁴ Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law. ⁵ And ye know that he (*Jesus*) was manifested to take away our sins; and in him (*Jesus*) is no sin. ⁶ Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not: whosoever sinneth hath not seen him, neither known him. ⁷ Little children, let no man deceive you: he that doeth righteousness is righteous, even as he is righteous. ⁸ He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. ⁹ Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his (*God's*) seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. (*The Amplified Bible translates vs. 9 as "No one who is born of God [deliberately, knowingly, and habitually] practices sin."*) ¹⁰ In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother.

Romans 6: 23 NKJV For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Hebrews 10: 26-31 NKJV ²⁶ For if we sin willfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, ²⁷ but a certain fearful expectation of judgment, and fiery indignation which will devour the adversaries. (*of God*) ²⁸ Anyone who has rejected Moses' law dies without mercy on *the testimony of two or three witnesses.* ²⁹ Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? ³⁰ For we know Him who said, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord. And again, "The LORD will judge His people." ³¹ It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

1 John 1: 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Matthew 22 NKJV ³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that He had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ Then one of them, a lawyer, asked *Him a question*, testing Him, and saying, ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?" ³⁷ Jesus said to him, "'You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' ³⁸ This is *the* first and great commandment. ³⁹ And *the* second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." (*The first four of the Ten Commandments show us how to love God and the last six show us how to love our neighbor.*)

1 Corinthians 6: 9-10 ⁹ Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit (*receive the promise of everlasting life at the resurrection – drh*) the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.