
Bible Study for February 1, 2017
Paul's Letter to the Galatians, Pt. 3
The Book of Galatians

Galatians 3-4

Chapters 3–4 are doctrinal. In these passages Paul explains the relationship between law and grace. Paul presents six arguments, three in each chapter, seeking to prove that salvation is by grace, through faith, apart from the works of the Law.

I. THE PERSONAL ARGUMENT (3:1–5)

Everything in their personal experience pointed to one fact: salvation is by grace, not by law.

II. THE SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT (3:6–14)

In verses 6–14: Paul proceeds to prove his argument by going back to the Old Testament.

Verses 6–7 quote Gen. 15:6. “And he believed the Lord; and the Lord reckoned it to him as righteousness.”

The Judaizers pointed to Abraham, the “father of the Jews,” as their example, and Paul does the same thing. How was Abraham saved? By faith! And all who trust Christ are children of Abraham, the father of the believing. See Rom. 4:1–8 for an amplification of this argument.

III. THE LOGICAL ARGUMENT (3:15–29)

A. The Law was temporary and only for Israel (vv. 19–20)

B. The Law convicted us of sin but never saved us from sin (vv. 21–22)

C. The Law prepared the way for Christ (vv. 23–29)

Galatians 4

Paul continues with more arguments to prove that salvation is by grace and not by law.

I. The Dispensational Argument (4:1–11)

In this section, Paul explains that the period of Law was a dispensation, a special way in which God dealt with Israel for a special purpose. God never gave the Mosaic law to the Gentiles. To impose Jewish regulations on Gentiles (or even on Jews today) is totally unscriptural.

II. The Sentimental Argument (4:12–18)

“Brethren, I beseech you!” This is the appeal of a loving spiritual servant, a concerned father addressing his spiritual children. “I became as one of you when I first preached to you,” writes Paul; “now become as I am and be true to Christ.” Paul reminds them that it was through some physical affliction that he first came to them, and that they had then treated him like an angel.

III. The Allegorical Argument (4:19–31)

An allegory is an event or story that has a hidden meaning. Paul uses the story of Abraham’s two sons (Gen. 16 and 21) to show that the new covenant of grace has superseded the old covenant of law.

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