

“Lessons On The Law”
Galatians 3:19-22

Introduction:

1. One Of The Major Themes That We Find In:
 - Paul's Letter To The Galatians:
 - Is Found In 2:16 - “Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified!”
 - This Great Theme:
 - Is One Of Our Greatest Blessings!
 - Because We Know - Not Only From Scripture, But Even By Our Own Experience:
 - That We Could Never Perform All Of The Works That The Law Of God Requires!
 - So Then - A Big Question:
 - Comes To The Mind Of:
 - Jews, Christians & Even Non-Christians Alike!
 - What, Then, Was The Point Of The Law Of God In The First Place?
2. Have You Ever Wondered About This?
 - Even As You Read Through The Old Testament:
 - The Importance Of God's Law, That He Gave To & Through Moses At Mount Sinai:
 - Is Clear & Evident!
 - And Yet - When We Come To The New Testament:
 - And Especially Here In Galatians:
 - It Seems Like That Law Is, More Or Less:
 - Put High Up On A Shelf!
 - **IE:** Like An Antique Vase, Which You Don't Want To Break, But You Don't Really Want To Use Either!
 - Well - The Galatian Christians:
 - Would Have Wondered About This As Well!
 - And So - As We Get Closer To The End Of Chapter 3 - God Addresses Some Of Our Own Questions About His Law!
3. In Fact - Paul Even Uses 2 Questions:
 - To Help Us Understand Both:
 - The Nature Of God's Law &
 - The Need For God's Law!
 - The First Question:
 - Is Found In 3:19 - “Wherefore Then Serveth The Law?”
 - Or - What's The Point Of The Law?
 - What Is It's Nature?
 - And The Second Question:
 - Is Found In 3:21 - “Is The Law Then Against The Promises Of God?”
 - Or - Is The Law Contrary To / Opposed To God's Promises?
 - Why Was It Needed?
 - These Two Questions:
 - Are Very Common:
 - What Is The Law's Nature? And:
 - Why Was The Law Needed?
3. And As We Look More Closely At:
 - 3:19-22 - I Believe The Answers Provided:
 - Will Help Us See Even More Clearly:
 - God's Beautiful Master Plan Of Salvation From Sin!
 - Let's Read These Verses Together:
 - “Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. / Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one. / Is the law then against the promises of God? God forbid: for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. / But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe!”

* The First Question Helps Us Learn About:

1. The Nature Of The Law!

- First Question:
 - 3:19 - "Wherefore Then Serveth The Law?"
 - Remember - Paul Just Got Through Telling Us:
 - That Nothing Could Be Added Or Taken Away From The Promise Of God's Grace:
 - That Was Made To Abraham And His Seed!
 - Not Even The Law Itself!
 - So Then - The Question Comes To Mind - What Was The Point Of God Giving His Law In The First Place?
 - "Wherefore Then Serveth The Law?"
 - Now - The Law That Is Described Here:
 - Is The Law God Gave Through Moses, And Ultimately To The Children Of Israel, At Mount Sinai!
 - And It All Begins In Exodus 20 - With The Giving Of The 10 Commandments!
- "The Law" That Is In Question:
 - Is The Entire Law Of God!
 - Often - We Tend To Divide God's Law Into Different Parts:
 - A Moral Part - Like The 10 Commandments!
 - A Ceremonial Part - Like The Laws That Deal With Worship & Sacrifice!
 - A Judicial Part - Like The Laws Used To Keep The Nation Of Israel Functioning Properly!
 - And At Times - It Can Be Helpful To Do This!
 - But - The Truth Is - All Of God's Laws:
 - Are Based On His Character - And Were Meant To Display His Holy Nature!
 - And They Were:
 - Given For A Certain Purpose!
 - Why Did God Give His Law? His Whole Law?
 - 3:19 - "It Was Added Because Of Transgressions!"
 - Was There Sin:
 - Before God Gave His Law To Moses?
 - Yes! Of Course There Was!
 - But - How Would One Know:
 - If They Sinned - If There Was No Law?
 - Well - Many Did Know Of Their Sin:
 - Even Though There Was No Written Law!
 - Think Of Cain - The First Murderer - God Told Him That "Sin Lieth At The Door!"
 - But Did God Specifically Command Him To Not Kill His Brother?
 - No! He Didn't Need To!
 - Sin Is Not Merely A Failure To Keep The Letter Of God's Law!
 - Sin Is The Failure To Live According To The Glory Of God!
 - Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God!"
 - The Character Of God Is The Rule Of God:
 - For What Is Righteousness & What Is Unrighteousness!
 - But - Because Of The Hardness Of Man's Heart:
 - And Their Desire To Do What's Right In Their Own Eyes:
 - Making Their Own Character The Standard Of Right & Wrong!
 - It Was "Because Of Transgressions" That God Then:
 - Codified His Law - In The Form Of The Law Of Moses!
 - It Was Given To:
 - Display His Character!
 - It Was Given To:
 - Disclose To Us Our Sin:
 - In A Greater Way!
 - To Show Us The Exceeding Sinfulness:
 - Of Our Sin!
 - It Was Given To:
 - Declare Our Guilt!
 - But It Was Also Only:

- Given For A Certain Period!
 - 3:19 - "Till The Seed Should Come To Whom The Promise Was Made!"
 - God's Law Was Intended To Continue In Its Full Force:
 - Until Abraham's Seed Should Come!
 - And Who Is That Seed?
 - 3:16 - Jesus Christ!
 - When Jesus Came:
 - According To Matthew 5:17 - He Came Not To Destroy The Law:
 - But To Fulfill!
 - To Keep It - Which He Did!
 - And To Complete It - Which He Did!
 - A Primary Purpose Of God's Law:
 - Was To Direct Guilty Sinners:
 - To The Only One Who Could Save Them!
 - The Seed Of Abraham!
 - The Lord Jesus Christ!
 - So That We Could Rest In:
 - His Righteousness & Not Our Own!
 - And That Is Why The Law Was Also:
- Given With A Certain Power!
 - 3:19 - "And It Was Ordained By Angels In The Hand Of A Mediator!"
 - Even The Way The Law Was Given Shows Us:
 - Our Need For A Redeemer!
 - It Was Given Under The Full Authority Of God:
 - But "Ordained By Angels!"
 - Or - Arranged & Set In Order By Angels By The Hand Of A Mediator!
 - What We Find Is That In Some Way:
 - God Used His Angels - His Heavenly Messengers:
 - To Give His Law Unto Men!
 - We Find This Stated In Other Passages As Well:
 - Acts 7:53 - "Who have received the law by the disposition of angels, and have not kept it!"
 - Hebrews 2:2-3a - "For if the word spoken by angels was stedfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompence of reward; / How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation!"
 - However God Used His Angels:
 - The Point Is – The Authority & Power Of His Word:
 - And His Law!
 - And Even More - It Was Ordained "In / By The Hand Of A Mediator!"
 - Some Apply This Mediator To Mean Moses:
 - But - It Seems Better To Apply This To Christ Himself!
 - The One Who Was In Charge Of The Angels & Who Directed Them To Give Us God's Good Law!
 - God Designed His Law:
 - To Be Binding & In Full Force:
 - Until The Mediator Himself Would Come & Fulfill All Of Its Requirements For Us!
 - And This Was All:
- Given According To A Certain Plan!
 - 3:20 - "Now A Mediator Is Not A Mediator Of One, But God Is One!"
 - This Shows Us That The Law Was All Still Part:
 - Of God's Single Plan Of Redemption!
 - It Was Not Designed:
 - As Another Way To Him!
 - Because A Mediator Does Not Work By Himself:
 - He Does Not Work Or Act Alone!
 - He Works As A Go-Between Between Two Parties!
 - "But God Is One!"
 - God Is One Of Those Parties!
 - And He Is One In Nature!
 - And Has But One Plan & Purpose!

- And The Mediator Is Sent To:
 - Fulfill That Single Plan Of God!
 - And Isn't That A Great Description Of The Work Of Jesus Christ - The Mediator!
- 1 Timothy 2:5-6 - "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; / Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time!"
- So - Back To The First Question:
 - "Wherefore Then Serveth The Law?"
 - It Is All Part Of God's Plan:
 - To Show Us Our Great Sinfulness!
 - And To Show Us An Even Greater Savior!
 - Our Mediator!
- And That Leads Us To:

* The Second Question - That Helps Us Learn About:

2. The Need For The Law!

- Second Question:
 - 3:21 - "Is The Law Then Against The Promises Of God?"
 - Is It Opposed To Or Contrary To Them?
 - Does The Law Take The Place Of God's Promise To Abraham & His Seed?
 - Or Does The Law Even Change The Nature Of The Gospel Of God's Grace That Was Preached Before To Abraham?
 - The Answer Is Clearly Given:
 - "God Forbid!"
 - Or - By No Means Whatsoever!
 - Instead:
- There Is A Great Conformity:
 - With The Promises Of God!
 - 3:21 - "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law!"
 - This Is A Hypothetical Statment:
 - That Paul Uses To Show The Value Of God's Law!
 - If A Person Could Be Given Life:
 - By The Law!
 - That Is - If A Person Could Be:
 - Justified & Saved By A Law:
 - Which We Know Could Never Happen:
 - But If It Could:
 - Then God's Law Is The Only Law By Which It Could Happen!
 - Because God's Law Is A Good Law!
 - Romans 7:12 - "Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good!"
 - Not Only Does God's Law Declare Our Guilt Before Him:
 - But Never Forget - It Also Displays His Character & Glory!
 - And So - The Law Of God & The Promises Of God:
 - Are Not Against Each Other:
 - But They Work Together To Accomplish God's Great Plan Of Redemption For Sin & Sinners Like You & Like Me!
 - In Fact:
- There Is A Great Condition:
 - Of Excellence - In The Law Of God!
 - 3:21b - "Verily Righteousness Should Have Been By The Law!"
 - In 2 Corinthians 3:7 - Paul Calls The Law Of God:
 - "The Ministration Of Death!"
 - Why? Because That Was What God Intended For The Law To Do!
 - 2 Corinthians 3:6 - "The Letter Killeth!"
 - But He Also Says That:
 - "The ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance!" (3:7)
 - But Then He Adds - 3:8 - "How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious?"

- The Condition Of God's Law Is Excellent:
 - And Will Accomplish What God Has Determined For It To Accomplish!
 - And That Is:
- There Is A Great Constraint:
 - By The Law Of God!
 - 3:22a - "But The Scripture Hath Concluded All Under Sin!"
 - This Is One Thing That God Intended For The Law To Do!
 - To Conclude / To Shut Up / Even To Imprison Us:
 - In The Bondage Of Our Own Sin & Guilt!
 - As A Person Is Confronted With God's Righteous Demands:
 - If Honest With Themselves - They Would Soon Realize That They Have Not Only:
 - Offended God - From The First Commandment Onward!
 - But There Is No Way To Excuse Yourself From Being A Law-Breaker!
 - But - Not Honest - Still Try To Excuse Ourselves:
 - The Scripture Has That Covered As Well!
 - Psalm 14:1-3 / Psalm 53:1-3 - "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. / The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. / They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one!"
 - The Law – And The Whole Of Scripture – Shows Us:
 - That We Are Bound In & Under Sin!
 - But Why Would God Give A Law Like This? Why Did We Need A Law Like This?
 - Because - Also In 3:22:
- There Is A Great Conclusion:
 - "That The Promise By Faith Of Jesus Christ Might Be Given To Them That Believe!"
 - We Needed The Law:
 - So That The Law Would Propel Us To Faith In Jesus Christ!
 - The Law Points Out Our Greatest Need:
 - Of A Righteous Redeemer!
 - And When You Believe In Christ:
 - All Of The Promises That Flow From That Faith In Jesus Christ:
 - Are Graciously / Lavishly / Permanently Given To You!
 - Just Like They Were Given To:
 - Abraham - 3:18 - "God Gave It To Abraham By Promise!"
- So - Back To The Second Question:
 - "Is The Law Then Against The Promises Of God?"
 - No! God Uses The Law To:
 - Lead Us To The Promises Of Christ!
 - The Promise Of Salvation / Life / True Righteousness!

Conclusion:

1. Has God Used His Law:
 - In This Way In Your Life?
 - And Is God Still Using His Law:
 - In This Way?
 - Let It Propel You To The Only One:
 - Who Can Redeem You From The Curse Of The Law!

Grace Baptist Church
Stephen Elmer, Pastor
 4245 North 200 West
 Greenfield, Indiana 46140
 317-326-2362
www.sermonaudio.com/wordofgrace
www.growatgrace.org
pastor-elmer@hotmail.com