

## The Circumcision Wars IV What is “the Curse of the Law”?

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Last time we were going through the Scriptures concerning Abraham. There are some very important things concerning Abraham that we need to understand. He believed God, was justified (Gen. 15), it was imputed to him for righteousness while he was yet **uncircumcised**. As a matter of fact, he was not circumcised until 13 years after that when he was 99 (Gen. 17).

Therefore, all the way through the things that God told him in keeping the commandments of God—Gen. 26:5—which is the whole key and crux summation of what Abraham did. That’s why all the Gentiles are brought into Christ through the example of Abraham.

Genesis 26:5: “Because Abraham obeyed My voice and kept My charge, My commandments, My statutes, and My laws.” When he was in uncircumcision and later when he was in circumcision.

As Paul says, ‘So he could be the father of the circumcision *and* the uncircumcision’ (Rom. 4). That’s why it was done that way.

Galatians 3:10: “For as many as are *relying* on works of law are under a curse, because it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them.’” Under the Old Covenant that’s what they were to do—correct? *Yes!* That’s why it goes back to Abraham.

- there was no temple with Abraham
- there were no morning and evening sacrifices
- there was no offering for sin
- *there was repentance and forgiveness of sin*

When the covenant was established with Israel, they had to do everything contained in the book of Law: all the rituals, all the ceremonies. They had to come to the temple. They had to do every one of those things.

Let’s just take the Galatians. If you could just picture Asia Minor and just come right to the bottom of it in the middle and go straight up a couple hundred miles, that’s Galatia.

- What opportunity did they have to come to the temple? *None!*
- What reason would they have to come to the temple? *None!*
- What reason would they have for

circumcision, which was in the book of the Law?

You could not participate in the Passover unless you were circumcised. If you go by the conditions of the Old Covenant you have to do everything written in the book of the Law. But if you do the things under the New Covenant, you have no ritual to perform, no circumcision to be accomplished, no animal sacrifices to give, no temple to go to. God made sure that that ended when He destroyed Jerusalem and the temple.

Therefore, if you go strictly by the Old Testament, without Christ, you cannot do everything written in the book of the Law. If you try to do so and neglect Christ, you come under a curse, because:

1. you can’t do them
2. you’re rejecting Christ

When we gather on the Sabbath Day, we gather to learn from the World of God—don’t we? There’s no morning and evening sacrifice that we offer. If you go back to the covenant with Israel called the Old Covenant and try and perform your Christianity through that, you are rejecting the righteousness or justification by faith.

We have examples of that today. There are many Messianic Jews who say that you must wear the yamaka, you must have the tassels, you must pray under a prayer shawl, you must wash your hands to be ritually clean and all of those things are works of Judaism that they have used to substitute the temple ritual that they used to have before the temple was destroyed.

That’s what it means, “...‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things that have been written in the book of the Law to do them’” (v 10) Today it is completely impossible to do so. That’s why in the New Testament Paul taught about the ministration of Spirit vs the ministration of death.

When people sin today within the Church we do not execute them for it. The only thing we can do—if it’s a gross sin—is disfellowship them. We do not administer the death penalty. We administer repentance and forgiveness, which is the ministration of the Spirit.

When the Gospel was preached to the whole world, then you cannot have an organization within any sovereign nation that takes the prerogative of the

nation to administer the death penalty. The nation that you live in will administer or not administer the death penalty in the civil law.

Under the Old Covenant it was civil as well as 'religious.' They had both functions there. In the civil government that we have today, they do that—whether for good or whether for bad; whether they do or whether they don't.

Today within the Church we cannot do that because we are not a sovereign within a sovereign nation. So therefore, we have only the administration of the Spirit, not the administration of death. We are talking not about how to keep a society running in the world; we are talking about the individual relationship between the person and God the Father through Jesus Christ. It's entirely different.

Because of all that we have discussed here, v 11. Therefore, *it is* evident that no one is being justified before God by *means of* law; because *it is written*, "The just shall live by faith."

Everything we do is because we believe God, because we love God. When we repent it's because God leads us to repentance. When we keep the commandments of God—those that are not under the ritual ceremony of the Old Covenant—we keep them just like Abraham did.

Verse 12: "Now then, the Law is not based on faith..." Faith is something you believe though you can't see—is that not correct? You believe your sins are forgiven because you believe God, and you believe that Jesus Christ is the sacrifice and you have proved that to yourself. Therefore, there is no work of law that will justify you. Christ is the greatest Justifier—correct?

- Can anything substitute for the life of Christ? *No!*
- Can anything substitute for the sacrifice of Christ? *No! Nothing!*

The Law is not based on faith. The Law either says so, or it doesn't!

"...but, 'The man who practices these things shall live in them.' (v 12). There's nothing wrong with that; that's an Old Testament thing, and that's what God said in Ezek. 18—if you're going to do them you're going to practice them.

Verse 13 is another key verse that the Protestants love and misconstrue: "Christ has redeemed us from **the curse of the Law**..." They read it to mean *Christ has redeemed us from the Law, which is a curse*. That's how they read it.

- What is the *curse of the Law*?
- Is the Law itself a curse? *No!*

Paul said it's Holy, righteous and just—it's spiritual! (Rom. 7)

- What is the *curse of the Law*?

Remember, the Law is not of faith. Therefore, it has to be written down—does it not? We'll read the *curse of the Law*, Deut. 28, and wherever else there are curses written in the Bible. Christ has not redeemed us from the Law, which is a curse. In Protestantism He has redeemed us from any obligation to keep the Law. Do you understand the difference in that? *The Law is not a curse!* 'The wages of sin'—the breaking of the Law—is the curse!

Deuteronomy 28:1: "And it shall come to pass, if you shall hearken diligently unto the voice of the LORD your God to observe *and* to do all His commandments which I command you today, the LORD your God will set you on high above all nations of the earth. And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you if you will obey the voice of the LORD your God" (vs 1-2). Then all the blessings that everybody wants are listed out.

Here is what the *curse of the Law* is. The Law is not a curse, but if you break the Law, you bring a curse. Verse 15: "And it shall come to pass, if you will not hearken to the voice of the LORD your God to observe and to do all His commandments and His statutes which I command you today, all these curses shall come upon you and overtake you."

Then you can read that all the way through the curses of the land, the cities, your body, your mind, your children, your finances—all of those are curses of the Law and are the result of sin. What do men need to be redeemed from? *Sin!* Sin brings the *curse of the Law!*

Galatians 3:13: "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law, **having become a curse for us...**" Christ redeemed us from sin.

2-Corinthians 5:21: "For He [God the Father] made Him [Jesus Christ] Who knew no sin *to be* sin for us... [Is sin a curse? "...**having become a curse for us...**" (Gal. 3:13) *instead of us!* He took it upon Himself.] ...so that we might become *the* righteousness of God in Him." It's saying the same thing just a little differently.

We have been redeemed from sin, and sin brings a curse, because you're breaking the Law vs the thinking of Protestantism: they claim that Christ has redeemed you from law—any obligation to keep any law—which is a curse. In other words, they're saying the Law is a curse. *It's not!* I hope I made it clear.

- Why did He do that?
- In order that you could keep Judaism?

That's why Paul was so hot after Peter, Galatians 3:14: "In order that the blessing of Abraham... [the promise of spiritual seed] ...might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, *and* that we might receive **the promise of the Spirit through faith.**" You can't receive the promise of the Spirit through any work of law.

Then Paul gets down to a very important point, v 15: "Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man's covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it." Even just in an ordinary contract, once it's signed, sealed and delivered you don't arbitrarily change it—do you?

Let's just say you agreed to buy a car and you agreed that your payments would be for 60 months and you agreed that you pay so much a month. Well, suppose about the 15<sup>th</sup> month down the line you said to yourself these payments are really too hard for me to make. I'm just not going to make them.

Now the curse comes. The repossession guy shows up and says, 'I'm taking your car.' *You can't take it, that's mine.* 'No it's not, you didn't make the payments.' *I decided that I didn't need to make the payments.* 'You signed a contract. You cannot arbitrarily change it in your mind. If you need to change that, because the payments are too high, come down to the auto dealer and we will re-finance it and work out a different means of doing it, but until that is done you can't modify it, you can't change it, you must make the payment or we get the car.'

Likewise it is with the covenant with Abraham. No one can come along and add to it. No one can come along and change it. This might help you to understand why God hates 'religion.' That's what they're doing! A covenant is even more stringent. If you change it or modify it you die! It's different than just an ordinary contract.

That's why Paul is saying, "...even when a man's covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it.... [You are to do it or die!] ...Now, to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken. He does not say, 'and to *your* seeds,' as of many; but as of one, 'and to your Seed,' which is Christ."

- You have the promise given to Abraham.
- You have the covenant that was made with Abraham.
- Out of Abraham's loins would come the Christ and all nations would be blessed through Him.

That's a summation of the promise. That's the whole

basis of Christianity. Until that time something else happened: God had other promises in that covenant that related to the *physical* descendants of Abraham—the 12 tribes of the children of Israel.

When God brought them out of Egypt, He had to deal with them—correct? Since He cannot change the covenant He made with Abraham, He made a separate covenant called the *Old Covenant*, which is also called the *Law!* That's what we're talking about here next:

Verse 17: "Now this I say *that the* covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ cannot be annulled by the Law... [the covenant to Israel] ...which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect." It didn't replace it. Nothing can change the promise. The promise to Abraham was sure. However, the covenant given to Israel was temporary. Let's define it a little more clearly:

- The covenant that God made with Abraham *was eternal.*
- The covenant that God subsequently made separately from that to the children of Israel *was physical and temporary.*
- Something that is physical and temporary *cannot replace* something that is spiritual and eternal.

It just won't happen. It dies and decays.

Example: What if you had the ability to take spirit matter and build a house that would never rot, never decay. New Jerusalem is going to be built out of that. Someone comes a long and says, 'I have a better house. My house is made out of the greatest brick you have ever seen. I make this brick out of the best clay. I do it myself.'

- Which house is of greater value?
- The house made of *spirit matter* that endures forever?

or

- The house made of *physical matter* that just send a hurricane or tornado and that's the end of it?

Likewise the covenant given to Abraham was *spiritual and eternal*; the covenant given to Israel was *temporary* and for a specific purpose.

Verse 18: "For **if** the inheritance... [of eternal life] ...*is* by law..." There is something inferior; law is inferior to spiritual. If there was a law that says 'do this' you have eternal life, how many people would do that? There doesn't have to be any repentance, any acknowledgment of God, you just go do the law.

"For **if** the inheritance *is* by law *it is* no

longer by promise. But God granted *it* to Abraham by promise. Why then the law?...” (vs 18-19). The covenant to Israel: Why did God give it? Why didn’t He just give the same thing to Israel as He did to Abraham? *Because God said He would not institute that until He came in the flesh and died!* That’s what Gen. 15 is all about.

Verse 19: “Why then the law? **It was placed alongside the promises...**” Because you can’t add to or take away from; but you can place it alongside—can’t you? That’s why the covenant to Israel could be extinguished, because it was a separate covenant.

“...for the purpose of *defining* transgressions, until the Seed [Christ] should come to Whom *the* promise was made... [to bring justification by faith and eternal life] ...having been ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator” (v 19). That is the covenant given to Israel. Who was the mediator? *Moses!* That’s why the covenant given to Israel was temporary until Christ.

*None* of the laws in the Old Covenant could bring eternal life. *No law* can bring eternal life! The law, as we saw, tells us what sin is. ***Eternal life is a gift!*** Since the children of Israel didn’t want to hear the voice of God, saying, ‘Moses, you speak to us and we’ll hear what God says.’ He became the mediator, but angels were the ones who administered it.

Verse 20: “Now then, a mediator does not *act on behalf* of one...” A mediator negotiates terms between two parties; that’s what Moses did. Moses went up and he got the laws from God and he came down and said to the children of Israel, ‘Here’s what God said.’ You have the one party, God; you have the second party, Israel. Moses is the mediator, and said, ‘Here are God’s laws and commandments and they said, ‘All that God has said, we will do.’

Then he wrote it in the book of the Law; they had the animal sacrifices; they put half of the blood on the book of the Law, half he sprinkled on the people; they were now in covenant with God for the Old Covenant. That’s what a mediator does.

However, in dealing with Abraham it was entirely different. Did God go through a mediator between Him and Abraham? *No!* That’s what it’s talking about in the rest of it here:

“...but God is one...” (v 20) in respect to the promise of grace, God is one; God acted unilaterally in dealing with Abraham. He came to Abraham and said, ‘Abraham, this is what I’m going to do for you. Come out here, I want you to look at the stars and see if you can count them. So shall your seed be.’ Abraham *believed* God! No intermediary, so God directly imputed it to him for righteousness. That is

to show us the relationship that we, through Abraham, have with God today—direct to God! We do have a Mediator—Christ—between man and God, but no other person.

Verse 21: “***Is the law...*** [the covenant with Israel] **...then contrary to the promises of God?....** [which He gave to Abraham] ...MAY IT NEVER BE! For if a law had been given that had the power to give life, *then* righteousness would indeed have been by law.” But law cannot accomplish that. You can write down a law, but there it is, it can’t give eternal life. It can’t bring the forgiveness of sin—***no law brings the forgiveness of sin***—only repentance and forgiveness.

Verse 22: “But the Scriptures have shut up all things under sin...” All have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3). In other words, there’s only one way out of sin! Everyone in the whole world has been shut up unto sin. That’s why it says, ‘the whole world lies in wickedness’ (John 5:19)—shut them all up to sin so that He could reach down and call the ones He wanted to call, so that no man could come and say, ‘I keep this law, I keep that law, I keep the other law, therefore, God, You have to accept me because I do it.’

“...all things are under sin so that by *the* faith of Jesus Christ the promise might be given to those who believe” (v 22). That’s why! You might think it’s an evil thing for God to shut up people unto sin. Just remember this: *now is not the only day of salvation; they will have their day.* Even being shut up unto sin is a temporary thing.

Verse 23: “Now before faith came, we were guarded under law, having been shut up unto the faith that was yet to be revealed. In this way, the Law was our tutor *to lead us* to Christ that we might be justified by faith” (vs 23-24). In other words, the law teaches us as a tutor or teacher that the ‘wages of sin is death.’ Christ tells us the way out of that death and the way out of that curse is through Him.

Verse 25: “But since faith has come, **we are no longer under a tutor...**” because we have the Spirit of God and the Spirit of God leads us: ‘*as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.*’ We are under God; we’re not under a tutor.

Verse 26: “Because you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ” (vs 26-27).

- Love of God
- Faith of God
- Hope of God
- To walk as Christ walked

Just law-keeping in itself has no spirit—you need to understand that. If you don't believe that, go look and see how Nazi Germany was run; it was run by law through their Fuehrer. What did it end up in? *Destruction!* That's why when you are baptized you are to clothe yourself in Christ:

- He is to be *in* you
- you are to walk the way that He walked

What do you clothe yourself with? *The fine linen is the righteousness of the saints!*

Now we have something that changes the whole relationship with God, which was not under the Old Covenant, v 28: “There is neither Jew nor Greek... [that was the whole basis for Judaism] ...there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus.**” Everyone that has the Spirit of God, regardless of his physical status, male or female, on the earth have equal opportunity for salvation through Jesus Christ.

- You do not have to come through Judaism and be circumcised.
- You do not have to go the temple in Jerusalem and offer sacrifices.
- You do not have to follow any of the laws of Judaism.
- You do not have to be circumcised.

***You must repent and believe and accept Jesus Christ and then you are put in this status!***

Verse 29: “And if you *are* Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to *the* promise”—*of eternal life!*

Therefore, no law anywhere can possibly substitute for that! Cannot replace it! Cannot even do the function of it! Neither can circumcision, yamakas, rosaries, idols and statues—those are all physical things! Any of those things, whether it be from circumcision to bowing down before idols, people are seeking to be perfected in the physical things or in the flesh and not in Christ. That's the whole summation of this.

Why they had the circumcision wars was because there was the tension between the physical and the spiritual, between works of law and faith, between those who believed in Christ and those who believed in circumcision. That is why we have this unique book—the book of Galatians—which I am sure has caused so many problems in theological circles down through history. There are books and books, reams of it, classes of it to try and explain it.

I want to clarify a couple of things so we really understand. We've talked about *justification*. Let's see a couple of things that is so vitally important concerning *justification*. Remember this:

*you are not justified in your sins; you are justified from your sins!* Do you understand the difference?

Let's use the example of murder: You cannot be justified from murder while you are continuously murdering—or stealing, or lying, or having false gods before you. ‘O God, forgive me, I've had false god's before You’ and you bow down to Vishnu.

Justification is from past sin, and there must be repentance of that sin and obedience that you start doing before you can be justified. There is no need to justify you while you are continuing in sin. There can be no justification, because you are living in sin. That's why Paul said, ‘Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound. **MAY IT NEVER BE!**’ It just cannot be! It's an impossibility! You can never be justified *in* your sins, only *from* your sins when you repent.

Romans 2 brings this out very clearly, and then you will understand. I think the biggest difficulty in understanding *justification by faith* is because of all of the wrong understanding of the Protestants and the messed up thinking that they have, *which is that the Law is a curse and you are justified from any responsibility to keep the Law.*

Romans 2:4: “Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the graciousness of God leads you to repentance?” You come to see yourself for what you are as evil, and what God is as good.

(go to the next track).

Here Paul is telling us that *repentance must come first*. You can use the example of children: Will you forgive your children for being mean and nasty while they continue to be mean and nasty? *No!* Likewise, you cannot receive forgiveness *in* sin, you receive forgiveness *from* sin; but ***you must repent first*** of that sin before there is forgiveness. The ultimate of forgiveness is that you are justified. But ***if you don't repent there is no justification.***

Verse 5: “But you, according to your own hardness and unrepentant heart, are storing up wrath for yourself against *the* day of wrath and revelation of God's righteous judgment.”

- There can be no justification while living in sin.
- There can be no justification without repentance.

That's why you cannot just open your heart and invite the Lord in. He does not come in unless you repent. Repentance is what opens the door.

Verse 6: “Who will render to each one according to his own works. On the one hand, to

those who with patient endurance in good works... [after they have repented of sin] ...are seeking glory and honor and immortality—eternal life” (vs 6-7).

So, it shows what you must do after you repent. Now it's going to show what happens if you do not repent, meaning that if you don't repent and you continue to live in sin, there is no forgiveness, there is no justification—period—regardless of what you may claim. That's why there is no justification in Sunday-keeping, because you're living in sin. You are not justified. It is a wrong application of grace.

Verse 8: “On the other hand, to those who are contentious...” Are not Sunday-keepers contentious? *Yes! or* Those who are lawless, are they not contentious against those who believe in doing good? All you have to do is just witness the hearings that John Ashcroft went through for screening him for Attorney General. He understands the operation of law, but all the lawless people who want to continue in their crotch-rot, because that's all the focus of the Democrats is anyway—right? *Abortion! Sexual immorality! AIDS! Homosexual rights!* Were they not contentious against someone who is against that? *Yes!*

“...and who disobey the Truth... [which means that you are not going to receive any justification unless you repent and obey the Truth] ...but obey unrighteousness—indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish—upon every soul of man who works out evil, both of *the Jew* first, and of *the Greek*” (vs 8-9). That tells you the solution to the Jewish problem today. Repentance! Not painting everybody as ‘anti-Semite because you point out the problems of the Jews.

Notice how it is one verse for repentance and doing good, another verse for lack of repentance and doing evil.

Verse 10: “But glory and honor and peace to everyone who works good, both to *the Jew* first, and to *the Greek*, because there is no respect of persons with God” (vs 10-11)—meaning that neither Jew nor Gentile; meaning that if you are a Sunday-keeper and if you keep the holidays of this world and you are seeking to be justified by grace, *you are asking God to be a respecter of person to you*, because you are not willing to obey God and repent and keep His way. Therefore, *you are demanding that God respect you!* God is not a respecter of persons. Do you understand that? If you want to be justified *in your sins* you are asking God to be a respecter of persons to you. But He is not! There has to be repentance first!

Verse 12: “For as many as have sinned without law... [without the knowledge of law]

...shall also perish without law...” Those who have never received anything concerning the commandments of God, take those who live in the deep dark jungles of the various places of the world. They have no knowledge of God, no knowledge of law from God, they live their lives without the knowledge of that. They're going to die for their sins without the knowledge of it. They may come to some knowledge of truth that certain things like murder and so forth are not right, but that's awfully hard for a cannibal to understand— isn't it? They'll perish without it. ‘The wages of sin is death’ and ‘God is no respecter of persons.’ So, the ‘wages of sin is death’ whether you know the Law or not!

Do they not execute people for murder in lands that have never heard the name Jesus Christ? *Yes!* Did they die for their sin? *Yes!* The ‘wages of sin is death’ to any person who sins, with or without knowledge of the Law.

“...and as many as have sinned within *the Law*... [in the knowledge of the Law] ...shall be judged by *the law*...” (vs 12-13)—because you knew. What did Jesus say about those who knew the will of God and those who didn't.

Let's see what Jesus said, Luke 12:41: “Then Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, are You speaking this parable to us *only*, or also to all?’ .... [those who were not prepared for His return] ...And the Lord said, ‘Who then is the wise and faithful steward...’” (vs 41-42). He's telling Peter, ‘This is for you and the disciples.’

“... ‘whom the lord shall put in charge of his household, to give *to each one* the portion of food in season? Blessed *is* that servant whom the lord, when he comes, shall find so doing. Of a truth, I tell you, he will set him over all his possessions. But if that servant shall say in his heart, “My lord delays *his* coming,” and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidservants, and to be gluttonous and become drunk... [spiritually speaking that is ‘drink of the cup of the wrath of mother Babylon (Rev. 17)] ...the lord of that servant will come in a day that he does not expect...’” (vs 42-46).

That doesn't mean His second return, that means He's coming for judgment. That's the day! Remember the warden in *Shawshank Redemption* just before he committed suicide. It showed that he looked up on the wall and it says ‘The Lord's judgment is coming and that right soon.’ That was his day of judgment. Likewise, it comes upon any when you think that He's not going to come.

“... ‘and in an hour that he does not know, and will cut him asunder, and will appoint his portion with the unbelievers. And that servant... [this applies to anyone] ...who knew the will of his

lord, but did not prepare, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many *stripes*; but the one who did not know, and did *things* worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few....” (vs 46-48). The penalty still comes whether you know or not know.

So, if you *have no knowledge* of law, you’re going to die for your sins without knowledge of law. If you *have knowledge* of law you are going to die for your sins because you didn’t repent and be judged by the Law.

The long and the short of it is this: *You cannot be justified in your sin; you can only be justified from your sins.* In order to receive justification there must be first repentance, and repentance requires *a turning from sin to obey!* Otherwise, you are still in your sins and you haven’t repented.

Romans 2:13: “Because the hearers of the Law *are* not just before God...” Many people go to church on Sunday and they hear; some try to apply some of the things in their lives to the best of the knowledge that they have. But until they quit sinning they haven’t repented, in spite of their good intentions. Many are false teachers and ministers, yes they are, no question about it. I don’t care how nice they may be, or how purry their voices may be when they talk, or how kind that they may be in their actions, if they do not teach obedience to the Laws and commandments of God, then they are workers of lawlessness.

That’s why it says, “...the hearers of the Law *are* not just before God... [meaning they can’t be justified] ...but **the doers of the law shall be justified**” (v 13). Why? *Because they repented of their sins and began to be doers of the Law!* That is the only time you can be justified through the grace of God. Not until then.

Let’s see that operation even in the Old Testament. Remember how many times God would tell Israel, ‘Return, Israel! Return unto Me and I’ll return to you. I don’t delight in the death of the wicked, but that you turn; turn from your sins and return unto Me.’ That’s a call to repentance so they can be justified.

Isaiah 1:10: “Hear the Word of the LORD, rulers of Sodom; give ear to the Law of our God, people of Gomorrah.” That’s the society in which we are living today, and they don’t want to hear it. They want to be ‘religious’—don’t they?

Here’s an example that even under the Old Covenant the sacrifices that they would bring, even on the commanded days that God said to bring them—but we will see that this more likely applies to their sabbaths and so forth—but nevertheless, they would bring the sacrifices. Even the sacrifices

without repentance does not bring justification even to the temple, *because they were living in sin!*

Verse 11: “‘To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices to Me?’ says the LORD. ‘I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I do not delight in *the blood of* bulls, or of lambs, or of he-goats. When you come to appear before Me, who has required this at your hand, to trample My courts?... [they weren’t repentant] ...Bring no more vain sacrifices...” (vs 11-13)—contrary to the purpose of God; contrary to the will of God. Before they are accepted there must be repentance.

“...‘incense is an abomination to Me—new moon and Sabbath, the calling of assemblies...” (v 13)—even if they’re on the right day. Look at the Jews today. Do they have the right Sabbath Day? *Yes!* But because they reject Jesus Christ they have no understanding. This also shows you how important proper Sabbath observance is, and coming together in fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ and learning of Their way on the Sabbath is so profoundly important.

“...‘I cannot endure iniquity along with the solemn assembly!’” (v 13) Why? *Because there was no repentance!* They had their lifestyle of Sodom and Gomorrah and all the lawlessness thereof.

Verse 14: “Your new moons and your appointed feasts **My soul hates**...” This is *theirs*, not God’s; *their* sabbath, which is Sunday; *their* holidays; *you can’t come into the presence of God while you’re living in sin!* You first *repent* of sin, then you come before God.

“...they are a trouble to Me; I am weary to bear *them*. And when you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you; yea, when you make many prayers... [Just like the pope, he blessed the fishing fleet and it sunk in a storm; blessed a helicopter and it falls out of the sky] ...I will not hear... [Why?] ...your hands are full of blood” (vs 14-15).

So, what does He say? *He calls them to repentance!* Verse 16: “Wash yourselves, make yourselves clean; put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes... [repentance; you must repent before there is justification] ...**cease to do evil**... [which is you are a ‘doer’ of the Law, not a ‘hearer.’] ...**learn to do good**... [it takes time to overcome evil practices] ...**seek judgment**... [correct thinking; get your mind squared around] ...**reprove the oppressor. Judge the orphan, plead for the widow.** Come now, and let us reason together,’ says the LORD...” (vs 16-18).

Here is God’s reason: repent and do good,

and ‘*I will forgive.*’ That applies to the New Testament and Old Testament.

“...‘Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they are red like crimson, they shall be like wool. **If you are willing and obedient...**’” (vs 18-19). ‘***For the hearers of the Law are not just before God, but the doers of the Law shall be justified.***’

There it is right there clear and easy to understand. And remember what Paul told Timothy: that ‘you’ve known the Holy Scriptures from a child, which are able to make you wise unto salvation through Jesus Christ.’ You take the same thing and apply it in a New Testament setting.

Verse 19: “**If you are willing and obedient** you shall eat the good of the land”—or for the New Testament for salvation. ‘Willing’ is a *repentant* attitude, a desire to do good, and ‘obedient’ and you shall receive eternal life. That’s New Testament doctrine—isn’t it? So, we can apply that here.

Verse 20: “‘But **if you refuse and rebel...** [Who are you refusing? Men? *or* God? *God!*] ...you shall be devoured *with* the sword;’ for the mouth of the LORD has spoken *it.*” That follows almost the exact parallel of what we read in Rom. 2—doesn’t it? *Yes!*

Remember this: *You cannot be justified in your sin! You must repent to be justified from your sin!* Then you are justified before God, not until. You must believe in Jesus Christ, nothing else will do it. That’s why in the book of Galatians, especially chapter two, what the Jews were seeking to do was to take something physical, like the requirement of circumcision, and to separate themselves from the Gentiles—which is something physical—and were trying to substitute that for the righteousness of Christ. You cannot do it! That’s a work of law!

***You cannot accomplish spiritual things by physical means!*** Never can! To be justified to God the Father in heaven above is a spiritual thing through Jesus Christ. Can a *work of law* such as separating yourself from uncircumcised Gentiles substitute for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ? ***NO!*** That’s why justification is by belief in Christ. That’s why in Gal. 3 it says ***there is no law that gives eternal life!***

Let’s clear up a couple of things in Galatians 3. I’m sure that when the Apostle Paul wrote this he did not understand that Protestantism would come down the road 1500 years later. I am sure that when he wrote the things like ‘the law’ referring to the covenant with Israel, it presented no problem to him. He did not understand that later those would come and twist and turn the Scriptures and say that means

that it’s ‘rejecting the law.’ **NO!** He’s just explaining the *purpose* of the law.

I’m sure that he did not understand that there would be those who would come along and assume that *works of law* meant commandment-keeping—which it does not! It does not mean commandment-keeping. It means a *work of a law* to seek justification separate from Christ. So, yes it did create problems. Yes, Galatians is one of those ‘hard things’ that Paul wrote—which is difficult to understand. Peter said to those who are ‘unlearned and unstable twist and wrest’ and create problems with it. So, we are stuck with this 500-year-old theological problem that we are dealing with.

Galatians 3:13: “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the Law...” The Protestants read this as ‘Christ has redeemed us *from* the Law, which is a curse.’ But ‘the Law is perfect, spiritual, Holy, just, right and good.’ ***The curse is sin!*** You don’t need to be redeemed from law-keeping—do you? ***No!*** You need to be redeemed from law-breaking or sin!

Example: If you perfectly follow all the laws of driving and you never received a single solitary ticket. Would you need to go down to the courthouse and see the judge and say, ‘Judge, I’m here to pay because I’ve been a good driver? I’ve kept every law that there is. I’ve never received any ticket.’ He probably would not accept any money that was offered, because it wasn’t due. You had nothing to be redeemed from. Does that make any sense? ***Sure!***

However, if you break the traffic laws, you must go to the judge and you must pay a fine in order to be redeemed from that. Therefore, you’re justified. If you don’t, he issues a warrant for your arrest, so you have to satisfy it. Christ did not redeem us from law-keeping; He redeemed us from law-breaking, which brings curses.

Let’s understand about the promises. {see sermon series: *Twelve Steps to Covenant Law* and *Three Covenants with Abraham*—which are actually three phases of one covenant} Once a covenant is made nothing can be added to or taken from it—period! It requires your death if you do. When you read Gal. 3 you have a contradiction with it in the *King James Version*.

Verse 14: “In order that the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles by Christ Jesus, *and* that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man’s covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it” (vs 14-15).



Verse 19: We have an apparent contradiction in the *KJV*: “Wherefore, then, *serves* the Law? It was added...” Why was it added? That’s not the correct translation, because no man can add to it. Not only are Paul’s writings ‘hard to understand’ but when they have the incorrect translation it makes it doubly hard to understand—doesn’t it? *Yes!*

Let’s come back to v 15 and follow through—*FV*: “Brethren, (I am speaking from a human perspective) even when a man’s covenant has been ratified, no one nullifies *it*, or adds a codicil to it.” A covenant is so binding that under the pain of death you cannot add to or take from.

Verse 16: “Now, to Abraham and to his Seed were the promises spoken. He does not say, ‘and to *your* seeds,’ as of many; but as of one, ‘and to your Seed,’ which is Christ. Now this I say, *that the* covenant ratified beforehand by God to Christ... [through Abraham] ...cannot be annulled by the law... [given to Israel] ...which was *given* four hundred and thirty years later, so as to make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance *is* by law... [or Old Covenant] ...*it is* no longer by promise.... [or by the New Covenant] ...But God granted *it* to Abraham by promise” (vs 16-18).

Can God go against His promise? *No!* Why? *Because God cannot lie!* It’s impossible for God to lie! If He gives His promise to Abraham, is He not going to fulfill it? *Absolutely!*

Verse 19: “Why then the law?...” The covenant given to Israel. You can’t add to the covenant promises given to Abraham; that was already set. You can’t take that away. What God did with Israel, He made a separate covenant. Can you have more than one covenant at one time? *Yes!* You’ve got the overall covenant with Abraham. Now He has to enter into covenant with the children of Israel 430 years later, which is called *the Law*. It did not replace; it did not add to; it did not take away from. **BUT:**

“...**It was placed alongside the promise...**” (v 19). Because you can’t add to (v 15). In the *KJV* it’s wrongly translated ‘added.’ It means *place alongside*. It’s not changing the covenant of the promises given to Abraham.

“...for the purpose of *defining* transgressions... [Is that not what law does? *Yes!*] ...until the Seed should come to Whom *the* promise was made... [until the true redemption of Jesus Christ came] ...having been ordained through angels in the hand of a mediator” (v 19).

Remember this: *You receive eternal life*

***through the promise of the Holy Spirit!*** You don’t receive the Holy Spirit until you have repented. The Holy Spirit, once it is given upon your repentance, puts you under the grace of God and you have been justified through faith that you may walk in obedience—keeping the commandments of God and loving God in the way that He shows.

This lawless society that we have, especially spawned by Protestantism, that you can be justified in your sins and the grace covers your sins while you are sinning, is one of the greatest lies that has been expurgated out of the Bible and misrepresented to people.

Verse 18—clarification: “For if the inheritance *is* by law... [covenant given to Israel, or any law—either one] ...*it is* no longer by promise.... [the New Covenant, which is the promise of covenant that goes back to Abraham, because the promise was given to him.] ...But God granted *it* to Abraham by promise.”

When God took him out that night—which later became the Passover night—and said, ‘Look unto the stars and if you can count them so shall your seed be.’ And he *believed!* It was ‘imputed to him for righteousness’!

- He was already obeying—wasn’t he?
- Was he not keeping the commandments of God?
- Was Abraham living in sin? *Of course not!*
  - ✓ He was walking with God!
  - ✓ He was a friend of God!
- Can you walk with God and be a friend of God if you disobey God? *Of course not!*

This is saying very clearly that you cannot have salvation under the physical covenant with Israel—being *the Law*—or is there any law given which gives eternal life? The reason is because it’s a *gift from God!* That’s why!

There is no law that brings eternal life! Let’s examine this: Do we have physical laws that govern the body? *Yes, we do!* How many people have come along and said that we are going to extend your life by taking this pill or doing this exercise, which is then *a law*—correct?

You take this supplement with this formula, according to *the law of this formula*, and if you take it three times a day—which is *a law of prescription*—you will live forever. Could you make lots of money if that were true? You can make lots of money on that even though it is not true! No one has defied Gen. 5 where God limited the length of days to man to 120 years. They lived longer before that, and gradually after the Flood the lifespan got shorter and shorter until today if you have three

score and ten—70—that’s great. If you are strong you live to be 80. Some live to be in their hundreds, but no one has lived beyond 120.

There is no law that gives life—period! It has to be *the gift of God!* Maybe that helps explain it. I think the Protestants have it so complicated and our minds have been so geared to Protestant-type thinking—before we understood the Truth of God—that it’s awfully hard to get it changed and understand the Truth. Plus, it’s further compounded because Paul’s Scriptures are ‘hard to understand.’

Scriptures from *The Holy Bible in Its Original Order, A Faithful Version*  
by Fred R. Coulter

Scriptural References:

- 1) Genesis 26:5
- 2) Galatians 3:10-
- 3) Deuteronomy 28:1-2, 15
- 4) Galatians 3:13
- 5) 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 6) Galatians 3:14-29
- 7) Romans 2:4-13
- 8) Luke 12:41-48
- 9) Romans 2:13
- 10) Isaiah 1:10-20
- 11) Galatians 3:13-15, 19, 15-19, 18

Scriptures referenced, not quoted:

- Genesis 15; 17
- Romans 4
- Ezekiel 18
- Romans 7; 3
- 1 John 5:19
- Revelation 17
- Genesis 5

Also referenced: Sermon Series:

- *Twelve Steps to Covenant Law*
- *Three Covenants with Abraham*

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