

## WHAT'S THE LAW FOR? Galatians 3:19-4:7

I can no longer function without my computer. *If it's down, I'm through!*

However, you don't have to know a lot about computers to realize a computer's a *stupid* little machine.

It doesn't know anything;

it believes anything you tell it.

If you teach it "*cat = dog,*"

it believes what you tell it!

It records it & stays 'til we erase it,

or teach it different ...*unless* hard drive crashes—doesn't remember a thing!

Our mind's like computer.

Teach us something long enough,  
even if it's not true;

we believe it until you erase memory  
& record truth.

We get ideas in our head;  
they're hard to get rid of.

Sometimes I wish I could erase  
data stored in our minds;

replace it with data based on God's Word!

Paul deals with 1 area of confusion in Gal 3-4.

Let's erase ideas stored in memory;  
see what God says!

We must understand *freedom*

–erase rule book

–erase performance-based mind set

=>*I have to be "good enough!"*

Logical question:

*If what Paul's teaching is true...*

*If law wasn't given until 400 yrs after the promise...*

*If rules can't be added later to change God's promise,*

*If blessing doesn't come by living by rules...*

## WHAT GOOD IS LAW ANYWAY?

Paul answers his own question: **19a**

*"It's added, alongside promise, because of transgressions*

**2 possible interpretations, both true.**

**1. Law teaches God's people how we ought to live in a pagan world**—how to be different

Since we live in a world, characterized by sin, God gave HIS people a standard by which to live: "You be holy, because I'M HOLY!"

**2. Law's given to reveal our sin.**

Faced with God's standard, no one can claim to be good—none of us makes the grade.

### **3 weaknesses of law 19-21**

**1. Law is temporary 19a** "Why was the law given at all? It was **added** because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come."

Law's only "until" something better  
—true Seed—comes.

When *the Seed—Jesus—comes*,  
law's no longer needed.

**2<sup>nd</sup> weakness of law: Law's given through a mediator 19b-20** "The law was given through angels & entrusted to a mediator. <sup>20</sup>A mediator, however, implies more than 1 party; but God is 1."

Promise given directly by God;  
law given by mediators

Direct vs. secondary source  
=>promise superior to law.

**God's promise has no mediator.**

It's *unilateral* promise.

It doesn't depend on anybody!

**God** guarantees result!

No one else is needed.

3<sup>rd</sup> weakness of law:

**Law could *never* give life 21**

*“Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law.”*

Law was never *intended* to give life;  
nor to justify.

If law could produce obedience  
& give life,

Christ wouldn't have to die;  
nor God give salvation *by grace*.

Law shows us we *NEED* salvation based on grace

**3 truths concerning law 21-22**

**1.No law has *ever* been able to give life 21**

**2.Scripture places all of us under sin 22a**

*“Scripture has locked up everything under the control of sin...”*

If security's based on performance, we're all in trouble!

We're secure, not because we're good enough for God to accept us, but because we're "in Christ.

**3.God's promise is for sinners who trust Jesus**

**22b** *“ ...so that what was promised, being given **through faith** in Jesus Christ, might be given **to those who believe.**”*

Law doesn't replace God's promise  
–nor amend contract!

It's given *temporarily*  
to lead us *to trust* Christ.

**ROMAN ADOPTION CONCEPT**

**3:23-4:11**

Illustration they all understand  
shows purpose of law

Child was heir to his father's possessions.

He's still legally a *child*,  
*no matter how old* he may be,  
**until** father declares him *“adult child.”*

Process concludes in ceremony before judge=>adoption

Father recognizes son's mature adult, with privileges

Changes clothes:

takes off *child's* toga; puts on man's

Until then, he's supervised by "pedagogue"=guardian

**"Pedagogue"**

= trusted slave; lit., "*child leader*"

NOT *teacher*, nor even *tutor*

**Ped.** walks child to school;

protects him from danger.

Helps him learn to face life,

teaching skills he needs

***Pedagogue's main responsibility***

***is to protect child;***

***prepare him for "adoption."***

That's what law was for!

**Contrast:** *child's life*

–under supervision/lives by rules

*adult life* => life in Christ by faith

**Judaizers:** "Receive God's blessing  
by obeying rules."

**Paul:** *law stands between us*  
& God's blessing

**Law doesn't obtain**

**God's blessing**

**Law protects us–**  
***until we grow up!***

**7 lessons based on Roman adoption custom:**

**1. Law provides protective custody until we grow up**

**23**

*"Before the coming of this faith, we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed."*

Romans made little difference

between slave & child.

**Law isn't basis of our maturity,**

**Rules *protect us***

***until we reach maturity!***

**2. Law functions as pedagogue, to protect us & prepare us to live as mature adults **24-25****

*“So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> Now that this faith has come, we're no longer under a guardian.”*

Rules can't *make us* mature/grow up.

Law *protects us*

**until** we become mature

Walking by faith, we grow up

–don't *need* rule book!

**3. Law's for children;**

**faith for mature people**

**26-27** *“In Christ Jesus you're all children of God through faith, <sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.”*

Living by rules is for *immature* people –not grown ups!

Mature people no longer need list of rules!

Compares *baptism*

to “*adoption*” ceremony.

Adoption is public act; father declares His child is an adult son; no longer under a pedagogue.

People who identify publicly with Christ by baptism,

change their clothes;

act like adult sons of God.

**4. Law creates distinctions;**

**faith makes meaningless** **28-29** *“There's neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male & female, for you're all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> If you belong to Christ, then you're Abraham's seed, & heirs according to the promise.”*

Law's distinctions:

Jews/Greeks; free/slaves; men/women

**Prayer of Jewish men** reminds them of distinctions.

Thank God; didn't make *THEM* Greeks, slaves, women.

In Christ those distinctions are done away.

In Christ we *all* become adult children of God.

**5. Law produces slave's life; not free sons 4:1-3** *"What I'm saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he's no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. <sup>2</sup>The heir is subject to guardians & trustees until the time set by his father. <sup>3</sup>So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces of the world."*

While son's *child*, little difference between son & slave.

He lives under other people's rules

People under law

–can't enjoy independence.

He *is* heir, but doesn't enjoy *privileges* of an heir.

As adult son,

he's *free* from what enslaved him.

Without Christ, we're enslaved under "*rudiments of world*"  
subject to rules that dominate world's thinking

Until we learn we *can't* do it, we're slaves to the rules => never  
leads to freedom nor contentment.

**Law leads to slavery;**

**faith leads to freedom**

**6. Evidence of adoption as mature sons comes  
through work of Christ, not by law 4-5**

*"When the **set time had fully come**, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup>to redeem those under the law, that we might receive **adoption** to sonship."*

Father chooses time to declare child an "adult son;"

God decides time for *us*

to pass from slavery to adults

God achieved this by redemption

–**paid in full** by Christ

**7. Presence of H.S. produces relationship of sons & makes us heirs 4:6-7** “Because you’re his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” <sup>7</sup>So you’re no longer a slave, but God’s child; & since you’re his child, God has made you also an heir.”

**God’s blessing *never* comes  
by obeying rules!**

**God’s blessing comes  
from Jesus' work in us  
from H.S.'s presence *in* us  
from walking *by faith*.**

**God’s blessing comes  
from God’s work in our lives;  
**NOT from our performance!****

**We’ll only enjoy freedom  
when we recognize:**

- 1. Law's limitations**
- 2. God's provision**

**Trying to be good enough  
=> *frustration & failure***

**Good news! *We don't have to perform!***

**God loves us**

**because we come to Him by His Son.**

**We come by *trusting Jesus*;  
not by our performance!**

**Most of us realize**

**we can't SAVE ourselves.**

**Do we realize**

**we still can't perform good enough either?**

**Our relationship with God  
is based on faith!**

It's based on what ***Christ*** has done  
–*not* on what we do!

By trusting Him,  
we receive eternal life  
...God adopts us;  
He declares us His free,  
mature children

**=> Now we can enjoy living by faith  
=> enjoy fellowship with God**

**Do WE get it yet?**

**True Freedom is found in JESUS!**

**Living by faith in HIM!**

**Eph. 5:20-21**

***“Now to him who’s able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup>to him be glory in the church & in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever & ever! Amen.”***