

Galatians

Chapter 3

In verse 1 Paul writes to the “foolish” Galatians in my translation. What does yours say? What does this say about Paul’s relationship with the Galatians that he would write such a thing?

In verses 2-9 he affirms that the Spirit comes from faith and not the law. He asks them to remember their experience. When have you experienced faith? Then he lifts up Abraham’s faith as an example. Are there others from the Bible you would lift up?

In verses 10-14 he switches from blessings to cursings. It reminds me of Luke’s version of the Beattitudes in (Luke 6:20-26). He also repeats a curse that was leveled against Jesus as one who hung on a tree (cross made out of wood.)

In verses 15-18 Paul reaches back beyond Moses and the law to Abraham and the promise. I disagree with his idea that offspring is singular and that Jesus is what God was promising Abraham.

Then he needs to further explain the purpose of the law in verses 19-29. Why was the law given (see verses 19 and 22)? What is the purpose of the law according to Paul? (Realize this is the OT law not Roman law or Galatian law which have a different purpose.) For Paul, Christ sets us free from the OT law and the Galatians do not need to be subjected to it.

In verse 26 we have the affirmation that we are all children of God – through faith. This is something new for the Galatians and the early church. The Hebrew Christians would claim to be children of Abraham, but not of God.

Those of us who are baptized in the name of Christ put on Christ and have a new life in Christ in verse 27. When were you baptized? What do you understand about it now?

In verse 28 Paul affirms that there are no longer “us and them” but we are each one in Christ.

And though some others who had come to Galatia after Paul seemingly stirring up things by preaching that the Galatians needed to be circumcised and follow the law, in verse 29 Paul affirms that through Christ we are all a part of Abraham’s offspring (remember from verse 16). We are all a part of the family of faith.

How far out does the word family reach for you? How far does your extended family of faith extend?