


Faith: Trusting, Walking, Living

A Study in Ruth & Galatians

Galatians 3:15–22


1. Paul has argued that “God deals with us according to his promise, and not according to our performance.”¹ He now presents his argument from a legal perspective. What principle of a “human covenant” (think here of a Last Will & Testament) helps us understand the nature of God’s promises made to Abraham? (v. 15)

Why is this so important? (v. 17)

2. To whom do the promises point? (v. 16; * Lk. 2:25–32; Jn. 8:54–56; 1 Pet. 1:10–12)
3. What does Paul’s appeal in the exact wording of an Old Testament passage (v. 16) tell you about what he thinks about God’s word and its value to believers?
4. This might be a good time to compare the language of the promise with the language of the law. Look at each of the passages listed below and write out the subject and verb of each passage. (Hint: Look for phrases that are repeated over and over.)
Genesis 12: 2–3 (promise)

Exodus 20:3–17 (law)

¹ Philip Graham Ryken, *Galatians*, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R Publishing, 2005), 127.

*The  symbol indicates verses for further study.

5. Consider the promise and the law.
 - a. Which of these can be broken? Why?

 - b. Which of these cannot be broken? Why?

6. As you reflect on your answers to the previous question, why is it such good news that our inheritance does not depend on the law? (v. 18)

7. Paul continues his argument that the law was never meant to be a way of salvation. What two points does he make?
v. 17

v. 18

8. Following Paul's argument, the Galatians may have been confused about the law. What does Paul say is the purpose of the law? (v. 19; Rom. 3:20)

9. How does Paul show that the law was limited? (v. 19a)

10. Why can Paul say that the law was absolutely not opposed to the promise of God? (vv. 21, 22, 24)

11. Paul says, "if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law" (v. 21b). What cost was God willing to pay since we are unable to earn our own salvation? (Lk. 18:31–33; Titus 2:13–14; 1 Pet. 1:18–19)

12. Now that you've had time to dig into the details of Paul's argument, step back a little and rehearse the truths of what God has done. Allow yourself time to respond to God's perfect plan to make a relationship with him possible. You may want to take time as a group to respond to the study in worshipful prayer.