

Noteworthy

Prayer Requests: Reagan Cunningham, Kelly Cochran, Kurt Dickey, Betty Eubanks, Charles Goodall, Linda James, Kirk Marschall, Butch Morgan, Dottie Reynolds, Wayne Ryland, Suzette Stevens, Arlene Turner, Kyoko Williams (sick), and Jeremy Whitehead. *Our friends and family:* Susan Bebbly (Bucky Day's sister; is being tested for possible uterine cancer.) Joe Brown (starts chemo in January; he will have 6 treatments, with one being done a month), Diane Anderson (Linda's sister), Elnora Bennet (Moses Stevens' sister), Mildred Church (shut-in), Denise Jacobs (Jim Abram's sister had last week's procedure postponed), Shelby Sprott, Ardis Tucker (is at home and would like to extend thanks to all for your cards and prayers), Bobbie Walker (Marian Church's daughter has concerns about gallbladder; Marian's sister-in-law also has colon cancer & in need of prayer), and Canera Wisdom (Larry Wisdom's mother fell, is in the ER, & not doing well).

Out of Town: The Ross family is out of town.

Group Meeting: Group (3) meets tonight after worship.

Afternoon Singing: Next one will be December 13th at 5pm (Next week).

Kid's Review Class: Will also be held on December 13th, shortly after the evening worship service (Also next week).

Ladies' Bible Class: The next ladies' Bible class is going to be on December 14th (Next week) at Audrey Davis' home (7PM). In preparation, please study lesson number XI (11) that begins on page # 71 in the book, "Some Do's and Don'ts for the Christian". (See the sign-up sheet in the foyer)

Assignments for Worship Service

Wednesday Night: 12/9/15

Song Leader: Keith Marschall
Opening Prayer: Charles Goodall
Invitation: Jeremy Wharton
Announcements: Eric Stevens
Closing Prayer: Trent Stevens
Parking Lot: Norm Blackburn
Recordings: Clay Sadler
Usher: Eddie Lawson

Sunday Evening: 12/13/15

Song Leader: Bob Marschall
Opening Prayer: Eric Stevens
Lord's Table: Ben Cunningham
Announcements: Mike Sadler
Closing Prayer: Nick Ross
Parking Lot: Jerry Williams
Recordings: Jim Elliot
Usher: Keith Marschall

Sunday Morning: 12/13/15

Lord's Table: Ben Cunningham (B)
 Jordan Lawson (C)
Serving: Clay Sadler
 Bucky Day
Song Leader: Larry Wisdom
Opening Prayer: Charles Goodall

Announcements: Mike Sadler
Closing Prayer: Charles Rawdon
Parking Lot: (9:00) Paul Lloyd
 (9:50) Ed Lawson
Recordings: Jim Elliot
Usher: Bob Marschall



**Lakeland Hills
Leader**

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SERVICES

Sunday
Bible Study 9:00 A.M.
Morning Services 9:50 A.M.
Evening Services 6:00 P.M.
Wednesday
Bible Study 7:30 P.M.

DEACONS:

Robert Marschall
Charles Rawdon
Michael Sadler
Moses Stevens
David Williams

EVANGELIST:

Ian Rice (863) 213-9795

"Paul's Unusual Use of the Words: "Faith" and "Law"

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. (Galatians 3:23-25 KJV)
This is an excellent example of the unusual way the apostle Paul often uses the words "faith" and "law" in his writings. The context shows that he uses both words in a more specialized way than they are usually used. Understanding this goes a long way in understanding the Lord's scheme of redemption and Paul's teaching on salvation "by faith."

The epistle to the Galatians reveals that it was written out of Paul's concern that the Galatians were in danger of turning away from the truth of the gospel or perhaps more specifically corrupting the gospel by mixing it with Judaism. (1:8-10; 3:1; 5:1-7). A careful reading of the book will see that he uses the term "faith" to refer to the system of faith revealed in the gospel and the word "law" to refer to the system of law revealed in the Law of Moses. He does not mean that the "law" does not have any element of faith (believing God and His word) in it. Nor does it mean that the "faith" does not have any element of law (command or rules to obey) in it. We can see this from analyzing chapter 3:

In verse 23, he speaks of, "before faith came" and in verse 25, "But after that faith is come." What is this period *before faith* came? It was the time when Paul and the other Jews (note his use of "us" and "we") were shut up unto faith while under the law as a schoolmaster or tutor until faith came. And what is the period of time *after faith* came? It is the time after they were freed from the schoolmaster. The faith that is *afterwards* revealed is the fulfillment of the promise to Abraham that "in thee shall all nations be blessed" (v. 8 – also see vv. 16-18). But after that "faith" (the fulfillment of that promise) came they were no longer "under the law."

Does this mean that those under the law had no faith of any kind? Of course not. The Old Testament speaks often of the Jews believing or being told to believe the Lord and his word. The Hebrew writer points out that all those, in chapter 11, who had "obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise." The promise of which he spoke is the same promise spoken of in Galatians – the promise to Abraham that through his seed all nations would be blessed. Those under the law had not yet received that "faith" – meaning the ultimate object of their faith, the promise made to Abraham. So, certainly there was "faith" during the time of the Old Testament law. But that is different from the "faith" of which Paul spoke. The faith of which Paul spoke came after the law – faith in that Abrahamic promise (the

seed, Christ). Thus, the time he spoke of as "before faith came" is before Christ came and did his redemptive work (as per the promise to Abraham) and "after that faith is come" refers to the time now after Christ come and done his work and made that redemption available to all people – Jew and Gentile alike.

Abraham had faith in the promise and was justified by that faith long before the law came. He was not justified by "the law" of which Paul spoke. That law did not exist when Abraham lived. But he had "faith" in the promise that through his seed (descendant) all people would be blessed – that descendant was Christ (3:16). His faith in that promise was so strong that when asked to kill the son through whom the promise was to come, he proceeded to do it, believing that the promise would be fulfilled even if God had to raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:18-19). The "faith" that came was that system of faith that came through Jesus. That "faith" did not come with the law, but after the law, with the fulfillment of the promise.

Verse 18 shows that the faith he is talking about is faith in the promise to Abraham. Here he states that if the inheritance (salvation/righteousness) were of the law (of Moses) it could not be of "the promise" (The one made to Abraham). Abraham was justified or made righteous by his believing and *acting* on the promise given to him. Especially in this context, "of faith"

and "of promise" means the same thing. The blessing that he was promised was to bring salvation to all nations (Jews and Gentiles), not just the Jews. (V. 28) The basis of that inheritance would be faith in the Christ – as the fulfillment of the promise. It was Abraham's faith in that promise, long before it came to pass, that justified him. He believed the promise and acted on it before the Jews received the law. So the faith (in the promise) by which he was pronounced righteous predated the law. Now we can be pronounced righteous by faith in Christ, as the fulfillment of that promise, when we accept Him and obey his will.

Verse 12 says, "And the law is not of faith: but, the man that doeth them shall live in them." Paul is saying that "the law" (the system under the law) is not of "faith" (the faith system in Christ), that provides for redemption. Under the law of Moses (before faith came) the only way that one could "live" (spiritually) would be to perfectly do the law. No one did. Hence, the need for redemption. The only way to "live" spiritually is by the redeeming benefits of the system of faith in Christ – called simply "faith" by Paul.

Verse 26 points out that they (Galatian Christians) were children of God "by faith" (in Christ as the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promise) as opposed to being children of God by the "law" (children born into fleshly Israel). Then in verse 27, he showed how one becomes a child of God "after that faith has come": "For as many of you as have been

baptized into Christ have put on Christ" So, the "faith" spoken of by Paul requires meeting the conditions of salvation. A child of God by faith is a penitent baptized believer (See Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38). This also makes them heirs according to "the promise" made to Abraham (v. 29) – "children of God by faith." This is contrasted with being children of God according to the law – being a child of God by natural birth into Israel.

Both systems have elements of "law" of some kind. "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith." (Romans 3:27) In the change from the old Testament system to the New Testament system, the Hebrew writer says it is a "change of law" (Heb. 7:12). Before the change there was law and after the change was law.

I thank God that I (a Gentile) along with my Jewish friends can all be children of God in one body by the same process. How? Not by the system of "law" revealed in the Old Testament, but by the system of "faith" promised Abraham and fully revealed in the New Testament – as Paul succinctly put it, not by "law" but by "faith."

Written by: Edward O. Bragwell, Sr.