The Children of Promise

Galatians 4:8-31
March 24, 2019
Purpose of Galatians

Paul warns the Galatians not to tolerate any addition to the gospel of grace, particularly ritual circumcision, because a Gentile following Jesus does not need first to become a Jew.
I. Introduction (1:1-10)
   A. The Apostolic Greeting (1:1-5)
      1. Author (1:1-2a)
      2. Audience (1:2b)
      3. Greeting (1:3-5)
   B. Rebuke: the occasion of the letter (1:6-10)

Where we would normally expect to find an apostolic blessing, we hear instead an apostolic curse!

1. Paul’s amazement at their departure (1:6-7)
2. A curse on those who proclaim or receive a false gospel (1:8-9)
3. Paul’s model of not trying to please people (1:10)
II. Using autobiography, Paul defends his apostleship and gospel (1:11-2:21)

A. Paul’s gospel comes directly from God (1:11-24)

B. The Apostles endorse Paul’s ministry and gospel (2:1-10)
   1. Paul travels to Jerusalem (2:1-5)
   2. The Pillars gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship (2:6-10)

C. Paul consistently was committed to the true gospel (2:11-21)
   1. Paul rebuked Peter at Antioch which proves his apostolic authority (2:11-14)
   2. Paul proclaims the biblical gospel: both Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith alone (2:15-20)
III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

A. The Holy Spirit is received by faith alone (3:1-5)
B. Gentiles become sons of Abraham by faith alone (3:6-14)
C. If the Law does not save, then what is the Purpose of the Law? (3:15-29)
   1. The Mosaic Law does not void the Abrahamic Promise (3:15-18)
   2. The Law shows us our sinfulness... (3:19-22)
   3. ...then leads us to Christ as the only source of righteousness (3:23-29)
D. Through the cross, Christ makes us Sons (4:1-7)
   1. An heir does not receive an inheritance until he reaches the legal age (4:1-2)
   2. God sent Christ to redeem guilty sinners (4:3-7)
III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

E. Paul’s concern for the Galatians (4:8-31)

1. Returning to the Jewish Law would be like returning to paganism (4:8-11)
   - They would be returning to false gods (4:8)
   - They would be returning to customs and traditions (4:9-10)
     • A Christian turning to the Mosaic Law is like a dog who returns to its own vomit (2 Peter 2:22)
     • A Christian returning to the Mosaic Law is like the Hebrews who wanted to go back to Egypt (Exodus 14:10-12)
   - It would be as if they had never even heard the gospel from Paul (4:11)
     • Living under the Law would forfeit the freedom they have in the gospel.
III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

E. Paul’s concern for the Galatians (4:8-31)

1. Returning to the Jewish Law would be like returning to paganism (4:8-11)

2. Paul makes a personal appeal to the Galatians to abandon the Law and cling to the gospel (4:12-20)
   ○ Paul pleads for the Galatians to imitate him (4:12-16)
     • In the past, the Galatians warmly welcomed Paul when he was ill (4:12b-15)
     • In the present, the Galatians are displeased when Paul told the truth (4:16)
       How could the Galatians think of Paul as an enemy, after caring for him before?
   ○ The Galatians’ real enemy, the Judaizers, want to exclude you from the grace of God (4:17-18)
   ○ Paul is anguished and perplexed about the Galatians (4:19-20)
     • Paul ministered to bring the Galatians to maturity
III. Using doctrine, Paul defends Justification is by faith alone (3:1-4:31)

E. Paul’s concern for the Galatians (4:8-31)
   1. Returning to the Jewish Law would be like returning to paganism (4:8-11)
   2. Paul makes a personal appeal to the Galatians to abandon the Law and cling to the gospel (4:12-20)
   3. Paul makes a personal appeal using an analogy: the true sons of Abraham are children of the promise, not the law (4:21-31)
      ○ To submit to the Law is to become a slave like Hagar (4:21-27)
         • Ishmael’s birth was motivated by doubt
         • Isaac’s birth was motivated by faith
         • The Law brings slavery
      ○ God calls us to enjoy freedom like Sarah (4:28-31)
         • The promise brings freedom
Contrasts in Paul’s analogy

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<tr>
<th>slave woman</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ishmael</td>
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Salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone. Adding any religious/ceremonial work results in a message that does not save.