

we live according to the law of Moses, if we have faith like Abraham's. For Abraham is the father of all who believe.

Galatians 3:15-18 NLT - 15 Dear brothers and sisters, here's an example from everyday life. Just as no one can set aside or amend an irrevocable agreement, so it is in this case. 16 God gave the promises to Abraham and his child. And notice that the Scripture doesn't say "to his children," as if it meant many descendants. Rather, it says "to his child"--and that, of course, means Christ. 17 This is what I am trying to say: The agreement God made with Abraham could not be canceled 430 years later when God gave the law to Moses. God would be breaking his promise. 18 For if the inheritance could be received by keeping the law, then it would not be the result of accepting God's promise. But God graciously gave it to Abraham as a promise.

2. Genesis 22:17-19 NLT - 17 I will certainly bless you. I will multiply your descendants beyond number, like the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. Your descendants will conquer the cities of their enemies. 18 And through your descendants all the nations of the earth will be blessed--all because you have obeyed me." 19 Why, then, was the law given? It was given alongside the promise to show people their sins. But the law was designed to last only until the coming of the child who was promised. God gave his law through angels to Moses, who was the mediator between God and the people.

Read Galatians 3:19 – 25 in your Bible

Galatians 3:23 NLT - 23 Before the way of faith in Christ was available to us, we were placed under guard by the law. We were kept in protective custody, so to speak, until the way of faith was revealed.

Read Exodus 20:2-17 in your Bible

3. Galatians 2:20 ESV - 20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Galatians 3:7 ESV - 7 Know then that it is those of faith who are the sons of Abraham.

Matthew 22:36-40 NLT - 36 "Teacher, which is the most important commandment in the law of Moses?" 37 Jesus replied, "'You must love the LORD your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 A second is equally important: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 The entire law and all the demands of the prophets are based on these two commandments."

## **“What’s Your Identity?”**

*Galatians- week #6*

### **INTRODUCTION**

In the third chapter of Galatians Paul addresses his readers as “brothers and sisters”. This was important because he wanted them to understand who they were in Christ. He wanted them to be assured of their true identity. There are many things that can define us. When we come to faith in Jesus He gives us a new identity, but we tend to fall back on other things or people or actions to define ourselves. In this section of our study of Galatians Paul explains how God sees us and what qualifies us to receive His promises.

### **Ice Breaker (Optional—8 min)**

When you are introduced to someone, what are the first things you tell them to identify who you are, besides your name?

### **STUDY QUESTIONS (45 MIN)**

#### **Label Makers**

#### **1. Read Romans 4:13-16; Galatians 3:15-18**

When we look at what was happening in Galatia we see that there were divisions forming. Some were followers of the law, others weren't. Some were ethnically Hebrews, others were Gentiles. These labels really shouldn't be the basis of who is qualified to inherit the promises of God. Division based on labeling still goes on in the church today. What are some of the labels you see causing division in the church? Do you feel you have been labeled either by others or by yourself, in a way that might alienate you from other believers who aren't wearing that label? What does Romans 4:13 tell us is required to receive God's promise to Abraham, and enables us to be called Abraham's children? (Galatians 3:16)

## Why was the Law given?

### 2. Read Genesis 22:17-19; Galatians 3:19- 25; Exodus 20:2-17

God made a promise to Abraham in Genesis 22 to bless all the nations. Then Moses brought the law hundreds of years later and following the law became commonly accepted as the measuring stick to qualify to inherit Abraham's promise. But the law did not promise blessing on those who observe it, rather it pronounced a curse on those who violate it. So why was the law given? (Gal 3:19-25)

Galatians 3:23 says we were under guard of the law. Maybe you never viewed of the law that way. Let's look at it from God's perspective. You were probably told as a child not to play in the street. That boundary seemed restrictive and spoiled your fun, but in reality, you were being protected from harm. Look at each of the ten commandments and see if you can identify the harm your Heavenly Father is using it to protect you from.

## Faith's Role in Our Identity

### 3. Read Galatians 2:20; Galatians 3:7; Matthew 22:36-40

Paul told us we are crucified, and we no longer live. Who lives in us now and how do we live this life in the flesh? (Gal 2:20) Our identity through our faith is confirmed in Galatians 3:7. Christ lives in me by my faith in Him, and by that faith I am a child of Abraham, just like Christ who was Abraham's descendant. You don't have to follow the letter of the law to prove your identity, it is yours through your faith in Jesus!

We should want to follow God's commandments not to prove our worthiness, but because of our unshakable identity, and because of God's grace. What did Jesus tell us was at the heart of the law (Matthew 22:36-40)? How much differently would we approach loving God and others if we saw ourselves as God sees us? Do you know of anyone, personally or historically, who was so secure in their identity in Christ, that they served others without regard for themselves or their reputation?

## WRAP-UP

The labels we accept to identify ourselves can create division amongst believers. You don't have to accept those labels and you don't have to follow the law to prove who you are. The law was God's tool to warn us and guard us from the dangers of sin until Jesus came to show us the way of faith that freed us from the penalty of our sins. By faith in Jesus, you are a child of God, and qualified to receive God's promises to Abraham. Knowing our identity is secure should motivate us to follow the most important commandments, loving God and loving others, just as Jesus did.

## Memory Verse

*For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus.*

*- Galatians 3:26 NLT*

## PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life: \_\_\_\_\_

Pray for your group members' needs: (see back for more space)

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*Challenge- As you navigate your day, look for opportunities to serve. In your home or workplace, when someone needs to do the grunt work, why not you? You came from God, and you are going back to Him, so for the short interim between the two, serve as your Master did.*

## Bible Verses

1. Romans 4:13-16 NLT - 13 Clearly, God's promise to give the whole earth to Abraham and his descendants was based not on his obedience to God's law, but on a right relationship with God that comes by faith. 14 If God's promise is only for those who obey the law, then faith is not necessary and the promise is pointless. 15 For the law always brings punishment on those who try to obey it. (The only way to avoid breaking the law is to have no law to break!) 16 So the promise is received by faith. It is given as a free gift. And we are all certain to receive it, whether or not