



# Digging Deeper

June 28, 2026

## The Christian, Law, and Living by Faith

By Enduring Word Commentary

C. The Law in light of the Old Testament and the New Testament.

1. (10) The Old Testament tells us that the Law of Moses brings a curse.

For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

a. For as many as are of the works of the law: Paul here addressed those who thought that their law-performance could give them a right standing before God.

i. The transition from believing Abraham (Galatians 3:9) to those who are of the works of the law had a purpose. "If even the great patriarch was accepted by God only because of his faith, then it follows that lesser mortals will not succeed in producing the good deeds that would allow them to be accepted before God." (Morris)

ii. "The hypocritical doers of the Law are those who seek to obtain a righteousness by a mechanical performance of good works while their hearts are far removed from God. They act like the foolish carpenter who starts with the roof when he builds a house." (Luther)

b. For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: The Christians from a Jewish background who believed Gentiles should still live under the Law of Moses thought that it was a path to blessing. Paul boldly declared that instead of blessing, living under the works of the law put them under the curse.

i. It isn't hard to see how these Christians believed that living under law brought blessing. They could read in the Old Testament many passages that supported this thinking. Psalm 119:1 says, Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the LORD! Psalm 1:1-2 says, Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the path of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the LORD, and in His law he meditates day and night.

ii. We must understand how the Law can bring blessing. First, we see that the word law is used in two senses in the Bible. Sometimes it means "The Law of Moses, with all its commands, which a man must obey to be approved by God." Sometimes it means "God's Word" in a very general sense. Many times when the Old Testament speaks of the law, it speaks of it in the general sense of God's Word to us. When Psalm 119:97 says Oh, how I love Your law! It is my meditation all the day, the Psalmist meant more than just the Law of Moses; he meant all of God's Word. Seeing this, we understand how the Bible is filled with praise for the law. Secondly, we are blessed when we keep the law because we are living according to the "instruction manual" for life. There is an inherent, built-in blessing in living the way God says we should live, in fulfilling the "manufacturer's recommendation."

iii. When Paul said that as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse, he didn't mean that the law was bad or the Word of God is wrong. He simply meant that God never intended the law to be the way we find our approval before Him. He knew we could never keep the law, and so God instituted

the system of atoning sacrifice along with the law. And the entire sacrificial system looked forward to what Jesus would accomplish on the cross for us.

c. Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them: To prove his point Scripturally Paul quoted from Deuteronomy 27:26. The Old Testament itself shows us that if we do not keep all things in the law and actually do them, then we are under a curse.

i. The important words are all and do. For God to approve you on the basis of the law, you first have to do it. Not simply know it, not simply love it, not simply teach it, not simply want it, you must do it.

Secondly, you have to do it all. Not some. Not just when you are over 18 or over 40. Not just more good than bad. Deuteronomy 27:26 specifically says that to be justified by the law, you must do it, and do it in all things.

ii. All means a lot. It means that while some sins are worse than others are, there are no small sins before such a great God. "Jewish keepers of the law would overlook small transgressions. Paul would not." (Morris)

iii. "It is worthy of remark that no printed copy of the Hebrew Bible preserves the word *col*, ALL, in Deuteronomy 27:26, which answers to the apostle's word all, here. St. Jerome says that the Jews suppressed it, lest it should appear that they were bound to perform all things that are written in the book of the law. Of the genuineness of the reading there is no cause to doubt: it exists in six MSS. of Kennicott and De Rossi, in the Samaritan text, in several copies of the Targum, in the Septuagint, and in the quotation made here by the apostle, in which there is no variation either in the MSS. or in the versions." (Clarke)

d. Cursed is everyone: Paul's point is heavy; it weighs us down with a curse. If you are under the works of the law, the only way you can stand approved and blessed before God by the law is to do it, and to do it all. If you don't, you are cursed.

i. Cursed is a word that sounds strange in our ears. Yet in the Bible, the idea of being cursed is important, and frightening – because it means being cursed by God. Not only cursed by our own bad choices, not only cursed by this wicked world, not only cursed by the Devil – but especially cursed by God. He is the one Person you don't want to be cursed by.

2. (11) The Old Testament tells us that a right standing before God comes by faith, not by the law.

But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

a. But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident: Paul had already proven this point in the Scriptures by examining the life of Abraham (Galatians 3:5-9). Now he brought in another passage from the Old Testament, Habakkuk 2:4, which reminds us that the just live by faith and not by law.

i. The Jews themselves sensed that because none could keep the law perfectly, salvation could not come through keeping the law. This is why they placed such emphasis on their descent from Abraham, essentially trusting in Abraham's merits to save them because they sensed that their own merits could not.

b. The just shall live by faith: This brief statement from the prophet Habakkuk is one of the most important and most quoted Old Testament statements in the New Testament. Paul used it here to show that the just live by faith, not by law. Being under the law isn't the way to be found just before God; only living by faith is.

i. If you are found to be just – approved – before God, you have done it by a life of faith. If your life is all about living under the law, then God does not find you approved.

c. The just shall live by faith: Every word in Habakkuk 2:4 is important and God quotes it three times in the New Testament just to bring out the fullness of the meaning.

i. In Romans 1:17, when Paul quoted this same passage from Habakkuk 2:4, the emphasis was on faith: "The just shall live by faith."

ii. In Hebrews 10:38, when the writer to the Hebrews quoted this same passage from Habakkuk 2:4, the emphasis was on live: "The just shall live by faith."

iii. Here in Galatians 3:11, when Paul quoted this passage from Habakkuk 2:4, the emphasis is on just: "The just shall live by faith."

3. (12) The Old Testament tells us that approval by God through the law must be earned by actually living in obedience to the law, not just trying.

Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."

a. Yet the law is not of faith: Some might come back to Paul and say, "Look, I'll do the best I can under the law and let faith cover the rest. God will look at my performance, my effort, and my good intentions and credit to me as righteousness. The important thing is that I am really trying." Paul proved from the Old Testament itself that this simply isn't good enough. No; the paths of approval by the law and faith don't run together, because the law is not of faith.

b. The man who does them shall live by them: The quote from Leviticus 18:5 is clear. If you want to live by the law, you must do it. Not try to do it, not intend to do it, and not even want to do it. No, it is only the man who does them who shall live by them.

i. It is very easy to comfort ourselves with our good intentions. We all mean very well; but if we want to find our place before God by our works under the law, good intentions are never enough. A good effort isn't enough. Only actual performance will do.

ii. This passage from Leviticus 18:5 is another often-quoted principle from the Old Testament. Nehemiah (Nehemiah 9:29) quoted it in his great prayer for Israel. The LORD Himself quoted it through the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel 20:11, 13, and 21). Paul also quotes it again in Romans 10:5).

iii. The effect of Paul's use of Scripture in Galatians 3:10-12 is overwhelming. We understand that we don't actually do the law. We understand that we don't actually do all the law. And we understand that this put us under a curse. Galatians 3:10-12 is the bad news; now Paul begins to explain the good news.

4. (13-14) Jesus redeems us from the curse of the law.

Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

a. Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law: Because we didn't actually do it and do it all, the law put us under a curse. But now Jesus has redeemed us from the curse of the law. Redeemed has the idea of "buying back" or "purchasing out of." It isn't just rescuing; it is paying a price to rescue. Jesus bought us out from under the curse of the law.

i. Simply put, in Jesus, we aren't cursed anymore. Galatians 3:10-12 left us all under a curse, but we are not cursed any more because Jesus bought us out from under the curse.

ii. Redemption is an important idea. "Redemption points to the payment of a price that sets sinners free." (Morris) Redemption came from the practices of ancient warfare. After a battle the victors would often capture some of the defeated. Among the defeated, the poorer ones would usually be sold as slaves, but the wealthy and important men, the men who mattered in their own country, were held to

ransom. When the people in their homeland had raised the required price, they would pay it to the victors and the captives would be set free. The process was called redemption, and the price was called the ransom.

iii. The image took root in other areas. When a slave had his freedom purchased – perhaps by a relative, perhaps by his own diligent work and saving – this was called “redemption.” Sometimes the transaction took place at a temple, and a record was carved in the wall so everyone would forever know that this former slave was now a redeemed, free man. Or, a man condemned to death might be set free by the paying of a price, and this was considered “redemption.” Most importantly, Jesus bought us out of defeat, out of slavery, and out of a death sentence to reign as kings and priests with Him forever.

b. Having become a curse for us: This explains how Jesus paid the price to rescue us. Jesus became cursed on our behalf; He stood in our place and took the curse we deserved.

i. It stops us in our tracks to understand that the price He paid to buy us out from under the curse of the law was the price of Himself. It didn’t just cost Jesus something, even something great – it cost Jesus Himself. We know that men cursed Jesus as He hung on the cross; but that compares nothing to how He was cursed by God the Father. He made Himself the target of the curse, and set those who believe outside the target.

ii. “Paul does not say that Christ was made a curse for Himself. The accent is on the two words, ‘for us.’ Christ is personally innocent. Personally, He did not deserve to be hanged for any crime of His own doing. But because Christ took the place of others who were sinners, He was hanged like any other transgressor.” (Luther)

iii. “Whatever sins I, you, all of us have committed or shall commit, they are Christ’s sins as if He had committed them Himself. Our sins have to be Christ’s sins or we shall perish forever.” (Luther)

c. For it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree.” When did Jesus pay this price? The principle of Deuteronomy 21:23 shows that Jesus received this curse upon Himself as He hung on the cross, fulfilling the Deuteronomy 21:23 promise of a curse to all who are not only executed but have their bodies publicly exposed to shame.

i. “This passage did not refer to crucifixion (which the Jews did not practice), but to the hanging on a tree or wooden post of the corpse of a criminal who had been executed. But in the New Testament times a cross was often called a tree and there is no doubting that that is what Paul has in mind here.” (Morris)

ii. Hangs on a tree: In the thinking of ancient Israel, there was something worse than being put to death. Worse than that was to be put to death, and to have your corpse left in the open, exposed to shame, humiliation, and scavenging animals and birds. When it says hangs on a tree, it does not have the idea of being executed by strangulation; but of having the corpse “mounted” on a tree or other prominent place, to expose the executed one to the elements and supreme disgrace.

iii. However, if anyone was executed and deemed worthy of such disgrace, the humiliation to his memory and his family must not be excessive. Deuteronomy 21:23 also says “his body shall not remain overnight on the tree.” This was a way of tempering even the most severe judgment with mercy. Significantly, Jesus fulfilled this also, being taken down from the cross before night had fully come (John 19:31-33).

d. That the blessing of Abraham might come: Jesus received this curse, which we deserved and He did not, so that we could receive the blessing of Abraham, which He deserved and we did not. It would be enough if Jesus simply took away the curse we deserved. But He did far more than that; He also gave a blessing that we didn’t deserve.

i. The blessing of Abraham is what Paul already described in Galatians 3:8-9: the blessing of being justified before God by faith instead of works.

e. The Gentiles in Christ Jesus: This tells us to whom the blessing of Abraham comes. Paul didn't mean that it only comes upon Gentiles, as if Jews were excluded, but that it comes also upon those Gentiles in Christ Jesus.

i. The phrase in Christ Jesus is important. The blessing doesn't come because they are Gentiles, any more than the blessing of being right with God comes to Jewish people because they are Jews. It comes to all, Jew and Gentile alike, who are identified in Christ Jesus and not by their own attempts to justify themselves.

f. Receive the promise of the Spirit through faith: This means that this blessing is ours in Jesus on faith and not the principle of law. The promise is received, not earned.

5. (15-18) The unchanging nature of God's covenant with Abraham.

Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ. And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

a. Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Paul first establishes the principle that even with a covenant among men, the covenant stands firm once it is made – no one annuls or adds to it. Paul's point isn't really about covenants among men, but to say "How much more certain is a covenant God makes."

i. But we shouldn't miss the first word of Galatians 3:15: Brethren. As difficult and dangerous as Paul's opponents in Galatia were, they were also his brothers. He confronts them and persuades them as brothers.

b. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made: In Genesis 22:18, God promised Abraham that in your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed. Paul observes that the singular for seed is used, not the plural. The point is clear: "And to your Seed," who is Christ. God is referring to one specific descendant of Abraham, not all his descendants in general

c. For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise: If the inheritance offered to Abraham was on the basis of law, it might not be permanent – because it would depend, at least in part, on Abraham's keeping of the law. But since the inheritance was offered on the basis of promise, God's promise, it stands sure.

d. God gave it to Abraham by promise: The word gave here is the ancient Greek word kecharistai, which is based on the Greek word charis – grace. God's giving to Abraham was the free giving of grace. The word is also in the perfect tense, showing that the gift is permanent.

i. "Judaizers might quote Moses; Paul will quote Abraham. Let them quote law; he will quote promise. If they appeal to the centuries of tradition and the proud history of the law of Moses, he will appeal to the grander 'covenant with Abraham', older by centuries still." (Cole)

D. The purpose of the law helps us understand our freedom from the law.

1. (19-21) The law was given because of man's transgression.

What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.

a. What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions: Part of the reason the law was given was to restrain the transgression of men through clearly revealing God's holy standard. God had to give us His standard so we would not destroy ourselves before the Messiah came. But the law is also added because of transgressions in another way; the law also excites man's innate rebellion through revealing a standard, showing us more clearly our need for salvation in Jesus (Romans 7:5-8).

b. Till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made: So as the Law was meant to prepare us for the work of the Messiah, it was given till the Seed (Jesus) should come. It isn't that the Law of Moses is revoked when Jesus came (Jesus said that He came to fulfill the Law, not destroy it in Matthew 5:17). Instead, the Law of Moses is no longer our ground of approaching God.

c. It was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator: According to ancient traditions – true traditions, according to Paul – the Law was delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai by the hands of angels. Angels were the "go-between" or mediator for Moses when he received the Law from God.

d. Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one: Moses needed a mediator between himself and God, but we don't need a mediator between us and Jesus – He is our mediator. The law was a two-party agreement brought by mediators. Salvation in Jesus by faith is received by a promise.

i. James Montgomery Boice called Galatians 3:20 "probably the most obscure verse in Galatians, if not the entire New Testament." Another commentator said he has read more than 250 different interpretations of it; another commentator raises the figure to 300.

ii. "The general thought seems to be that the promise must be considered superior to the law because the law is two-sided. The law was mediated, and this means that man was a party to it. The promise, on the other hand, is unilateral; man is not a party to it." (Boice)

e. Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! The law is not something evil, opposing God's promise. The problem with the law is found in its inability to give strength to those who desire to keep it. If the law could have given life, then it could have brought righteousness. But the Law of Moses brings no life; it simply states the command, tells us to keep it, and tells us the consequences if we break the command.

i. "People foolish but wise in their own conceits jump to the conclusion: If the Law does not justify, it is good for nothing. How about that? Because money does not justify, would you say that money is good for nothing? Because the eyes do not justify, would you have them taken out? Because the Law does not justify it does not follow that the Law is without value." (Luther)

2. (22) The picture of our imprisonment under sin.

But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

a. The Scripture has confined all under sin: Paul paints a picture of imprisonment. The bars of the cell are sin, keeping us confined. The Scripture put us in the prison, because it pointed out our sinful condition. So we sit imprisoned by sin, and the law can not help us, because the law put us in the prison.

i. "Sin is personified as a jailor, keeping sinners under its control so that they cannot break free." (Morris)

ii. Some protest and say, "I'm not a prisoner to sin." There is a simple way to prove it: stop sinning. But if you can't stop sinning, or ever have a record of sin, then you are imprisoned by the law of God.

iii. "When the Law drives you to the point of despair, let it drive you a little farther, let it drive you straight into the arms of Jesus who says: 'Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.'" (Luther)

b. Given to those who believe: Only faith can break us out of our confinement to sin. The Law of Moses can show us clearly our problem and God's standard, but it cannot give us the freedom that only Jesus can give. The freedom is given to those who believe.

i. The bars of our sin are strong; we can't see through them ourselves. There is no chance of a jailbreak. Instead, an offer is made by the warden Himself to simply open the door and walk out – but you have to acknowledge you are confined, that you deserve to be in the cell, and ask Him to free you. When the prosecutor accuses the warden of not being just, the warden simply points out that the freed prisoner's sentence was completely fulfilled – by Himself!

ii. "Far from being the gateway into a glorious liberty, it turns out to be a jailor, shutting people up. The result is that the only way of escape was through faith." (Morris)

3. (23-25) The Law of Moses is our tutor, a guardian to bring us to Jesus.

But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

a. Before faith came: Before we were saved by faith; before we lived our lives by faith, we were kept under guard by the law. Here, Paul uses a different word and a different idea than when he wrote the Scripture has confined all under sin in the previous verse. The idea behind confined is imprisonment; the idea behind under guard is protective custody. There is a sense in which we were imprisoned by our own sin under the law; but there is also another sense in which it guarded us in protective custody.

i. How does the law protect us? It protects us by showing us God's heart. It protects us by showing us the best way to live. It protects us by showing what should be approved and disapproved among men. It protects us by providing a foundation for civil law. In these ways and more, we were kept under guard by the law.

b. Kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed: The Law of Moses prepared us to come to Jesus by the way it reveals God's character and the way it exposed our sin. Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. The purpose of the Law of Moses is fulfilled when we stop trying to justify ourselves and come to faith in Jesus.

i. The whole purpose of the law is to bring us to Jesus. Therefore, if someone doesn't present the Law in a manner that brings people to faith in Jesus, they aren't presenting the Law properly. The way Jesus presented the Law was to show people that they could not fulfill it, and needed to look outside of their law-keeping to find a righteousness greater than the Scribe and the Pharisees (Matthew 5:17-48).

ii. "Satan would have us prove ourselves holy by the law, which God gave to prove us sinners." (Andrew Jukes, cited in Stott)

c. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor: Once we have come to a relationship of faith, we no longer have to live under our tutor, though we remember the behavior he has taught us. So we respect our tutor, the Law; but we don't live under him. We live under Jesus by faith.

i. Tutor is not a completely accurate translation of the idea of the ancient Greek word paidagogos. The paidagogos did not simply teach a child. More than that, the tutor was the child's guardian, watching

over the child and his behavior. The idea is more of a nanny than of a teacher, but since the tutor could discipline the child, the tutor was also the “dean of discipline.”

ii. Morris translates tutor as custodian. “The custodian was not a teacher, but a slave whose special task was to look after a child. He exercised a general supervision over the boy’s activities, and it was his responsibility to bring him to the teacher who would give him the instruction that befitted his station.” (Morris)

iii. When the child has grown, he doesn’t do away with the discipline and lessons he gained from the tutor; but he also doesn’t live under the tutor any longer. This is our relation to the law of God. We learn from it; we remember our lessons from it, but we don’t live under the law. “The simile of the schoolmaster is striking. Schoolmasters are indispensable. But show me a pupil who loves his schoolmaster.” (Luther)

4. (26-27) By faith, we find our identity with Jesus Christ.

For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

a. For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus: Compared to what was being taught among the Galatians, this was a revolutionary statement. In traditional Jewish thinking (carried into Christianity by Jewish Christians), your standing before God was measured by your obedience to the law. To truly be close to God – considered sons of God – you had to be extremely observant of the law, just as the Scribes and Pharisees were (Matthew 23). Here, Paul says we can be considered sons of God in a completely different way: through faith in Christ Jesus.

i. The standing is impressive. To be among the sons of God means that we have a special relationship with God as a loving and caring Father. It is a place of closeness, a place of affection, a place of special care and attention.

ii. The method is impressive. To become a son of God through faith in Christ Jesus means much more than believing that He exists or did certain things. It is to put our trust in Him, both for now and eternity.

b. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ: Here, using the picture of baptism, Paul illustrates what it means to have faith in Christ Jesus. He doesn’t say we were baptized into water, but baptized into Christ. Just as in water baptism a person is immersed in water, so when we place our faith in Christ Jesus, we are immersed in Jesus.

i. Many Christians seem content with just “dipping a bit” into Jesus. God wants us to be fully immersed in Jesus; not sprinkled, not just a part of us dipped. When a person is immersed in water, you don’t even see the person much anymore – you mostly see the water. When we live as baptized into Christ, you don’t see so much of “me” anymore; you mostly see Jesus.

ii. It should be stressed that this is the baptism that really saves us: our immersion into Jesus. If a person isn’t baptized into Christ, he could be dunked a thousand times into water and it would make no eternal difference. If a person has been baptized into Christ, then he should follow through and do what Jesus told him to do: receive baptism as a demonstration of his commitment to Jesus (Matthew 28:19-20).

c. Have put on Christ: Another way of expressing our immersion in Jesus is to say that we have put on Christ. In the original language, the phrase has the idea of putting on a suit of clothes. So we “clothe ourselves” with Jesus as our identity.

i. How we dress has a real impact on how we think and act. How we dress has a real impact on how we appear to others. We also need to know how to dress appropriately for each occasion. Paul says to us, "Your appropriate clothing for each day is to put on Christ. People should see that you belong to Him by looking at your life. You should live with the awareness that you are adorned with Jesus."

ii. Some people might wonder if this is only play-acting, if it is really an illusion, like a child playing "dress-up." The answer is simple. It is only an illusion if there is no spiritual reality behind it. In this verse, Paul really speaks of the spiritual reality – those who were baptized into Christ really have put on Christ. Now they are called to live each day consistent with the spiritual reality.

5. (28-29) Our equal standing with others who come to God through faith.

There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

a. There is neither Jew nor Greek: This was an amazing revolution. The whole problem among the Galatian Christians is that some wanted to still observe the dividing line between Jew and Greek. Paul writes, "In Jesus Christ that line is done away with. When we are in Jesus, there is neither Jew nor Greek."

b. There is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus: The dividing line between Jew and Greek is not the only dividing line erased. Regarding our standing before God in Jesus, every dividing line is erased. Now that Jesus is our identity, that is more important than any prior identity we possessed. We are all one in Christ Jesus.

i. At that time, some Rabbis quoted a morning prayer that was popular among many Jews of that day. According to William Barclay, in that prayer the Jewish man would thank God that he was not born a Gentile, a slave, or a woman. Paul takes each of these categories and shows them to be equal in Jesus.

ii. Sadly, some Christians still draw lines today. Some draw lines between denominations, some draw lines between races, some draw lines between nations, some draw lines between political parties, and some draw lines between economic classes. For example, if you feel you have more common ground with an unbeliever who shares your race or your political party than with a genuine Christian from another race or political party, you have drawn a line that Jesus died on the cross to erase.

iii. This doesn't mean that there are no differences. Paul knew that there was still a difference between Jew and Greek, and his evangelistic approach might differ to each group (1 Corinthians 9:19-21). The slave still had a daily obligation to obey his master, though he might be equal in Jesus (Ephesians 6:5-8). There are still different roles for male and female in the home and in the church (1 Timothy 2:1-15, Ephesians 5:22-33), though they are equal in standing before God. There are differences in role and in function, but none in standing before God through faith in Jesus. "When we say that Christ has abolished these distinctions, we mean not that they do not exist, but that they no longer create any barriers to fellowship." (Stott)

iv. "He is not writing about a unity that comes about as a result of human achievement. He is saying that when people are saved by Jesus Christ they are brought into a marvelous unity, a unity between the saved and the Saviour and a unity that binds together all the saved." (Morris)

c. You are all one in Christ Jesus: This is amazing. Some would have Paul exclude some of the Christians from a Gentile background because they hadn't come under the Law of Moses. Paul includes them saying "You are all one in Christ Jesus." Others might have Paul exclude some of the Christians from a

Jewish background, because their theology was wrong on this point and Paul needed to correct them. Paul includes them saying "You are all one in Christ Jesus."

i. "Many of God's children lack a deep understanding of the Christian way, but that does not mean that they are not genuine Christians. Being a Christian is being a believer, not having an intellectual answer to all the problems we meet as we live out our Christian lives." (Morris)

d. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed: Since all Christians belong to Jesus the Messiah, all Christians are spiritual descendants of Abraham and heirs of God. This place of high privilege comes according to the promise, not according to law or works. We are connected with the long line of God's people assembled throughout all the ages.

i. Some Jewish Christians said to the Galatians that if they submitted to the law and became circumcised, they could enjoy the status of being Abraham's seed. Paul points out that this status was already theirs through faith in Jesus.

ii. Paul has reinforced this principle throughout this section by his repeating of the title Christ for Jesus (used 11 times in the last 17 verses). When Paul referred to Jesus as Christ, he emphasized Jesus' role as the promised Messiah of the Jewish people – and of all the world, as Paul emphasized.

e. If you are Christ's: This is the issue. The issue is not "Are you under the law?" The issue is not "Are you a Jew or a Gentile?" The issue is not "Are you slave or free?" The issue is not "Are you a man or a woman?" The only issue is if you are Christ's.

i. If we are Christ's, then...

· We find our place in eternity, because we are sons and daughters of God.

· We find our place in society, because we are brothers and sisters in the family of God.

· We find our place in history, because we are part of God's plan of the ages, related spiritually to Abraham by our faith in Jesus.

ii. "It enables me to answer the most basic of all human questions, 'Who am I?' and to say, 'In Christ I am a son of God. In Christ I am united to all the redeemed people of God, past, present, and future. In Christ I discover my identity. In Christ I find my feet. In Christ I come home.'" (Stott)