

You Are All Sons Of God

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[0:00] Gilligan's Island Daytime soaps General Hospital Days of our lives
48 hours Blue Bloods I think Magnum P.I.

The Brady Bunch I think every one of these shows had one particular episode the amnesia episode you know someone Marsha Gilligan they hit their head they forget who they are and for the whole episode they're trying to remember who they are and when they remember who they are they remember who they are the episode is about they're losing their identity and all of the cast is trying to help them to remember their identity well it makes for great entertainment but spiritually speaking there's this thing out there called gospel amnesia amnesia and what gospel amnesia is is this very harmful condition

Christians regularly deal with it's when a Christian forgets who they are in Christ it's when a Christian forgets what all God has done for them in the person of Jesus when that happens it's gospel amnesia and it's not just kind of a condition it's really dangerous because when you forget who you are in the gospel of Jesus Christ you then go back to old addictions and the greatest addiction that we all face as human beings is trying to save ourselves to make ourselves right in God's eyes to try to obey our way into salvation so what I want to help you realize is that gospel amnesia typically ends in some kind of a legalism and classically defined legalism is trying to kind of obey your way into God's grace trying to earn your salvation now you may be thinking when you hear legalism you think of those

Pharisees from the gospels those men who just stared down their noses in self-righteousness at those people who weren't as righteous as they were that is a kind of legalism but it's not the only kind of legalism there's a second class kind of legalism and it's what the apostle Paul raises with these Galatians in Galatians 3.3 he says are you so foolish having begun by the spirit are you now being perfected by the flesh this second class kind of legalism is this thinking that well what Jesus began in me I'll finish off by my own obedience the salvation that God has started in me by grace and his spirit well I will finish that off by my own obedience through the power of my flesh that is just another kind of legalism that's just another way of saying my salvation is dependent on me Jesus may have saved me but I keep myself saved it's a salvation by works and it's not the gospel of grace the book of Galatians is all about the gospel of grace how the gospel Christ crucified sets us free from start to finish from sin and the law the gospel is all about God's grace it's all about Christ the first people who received this letter which is approaching 2000 years old now this letter to the Galatians the first person people that received this well they had forgotten who they were in Christ they had forgotten all of what God had done for them through Jesus Christ it wasn't connecting for them and because they were confused about this it made them right for some false teachers to come in and there were false teachers that came in and they were teaching these

[4:56] Gentile Christians in Galatia they were saying hey it's okay that you started in Jesus but you know what you need to start getting circumcised and then you need to start obeying Jewish dietary laws no more pork for you and then you really need to take off from work for Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah so you can observe all the Jewish holy days too and so what they're saying is hey you know I'm glad you believe in Jesus but you really need to finish this off by obeying the law and so Paul writes this letter to this confused church to set the gospel record straight and so this morning in the passage that we're looking at here's what Paul's getting done he's saying if you're in Christ you're not under the law if you're in Christ you're not under the law let's be clear

Paul writes if you're in Christ you're not under the law of Moses and in order to convince us that we are in Christ and not under the law Paul clarifies three realities in Galatians chapter 3 verses 15 through 29 first he's going to clear up this promise that was made to Abraham and I got to tell you there is some theological gold here that's in verses 15 through 18 and then he's going to clarify the actual purpose of the Mosaic law which heightens the promise and then in verses 25 through 29 he's going to point us to the promised fulfilled he wants us to be clear on who we are in Christ and that we're not under the law anymore so this this passage it's it's all about God's promise to Abraham that's not fulfilled by the law but fulfilled in Christ and in it all we're going to walk away saying oh that's who I am in Jesus Christ so you may have come in here this morning and you were suffering gospel amnesia and you didn't even really know it but my desire is for you to leave today fully aware of what God and Christ has done for you so you leave this building with your head held up in Christ Jesus if you're in Christ you don't need to slump under the law you hold your head up and all of God's blessings poured out on you in Christ you ready to dig in let's look at this promise that was made in verses 15 through 18 Paul starts off by saying to give a human example and all of a sudden we're like wait hold on a second what's going on here I feel like I'm entering into a conversation halfway through and we are so he's he's saying hey let me give you a human example and what he's going to kind of demonstrate here he's been talking about verse chapter 3 verse 8 and the scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith preach the gospel beforehand to Abraham saying in all and you shall all the nations be blessed and then in verse 14 it says so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham I come to the Gentiles so what he's going to say is hey let me help you understand by way of human example how Gentiles non-Jews can become sons of Abraham it's got everything to do with the promise so to give a human example he says even with a man-made covenant no one annuls it or adds to it once it's been ratified so here's what's going on here Paul is saying we all get this general principle of kind of covenants and wills and it applies to the relationship between Abraham's promise God's promise to Abraham and the law of Moses and so here's the general principle let me let me try to illustrate it let's say Jenny and I make a will we have it ratified it gets sealed by some important person and none of our children can now change that will however they see fit you don't go back and change something that's been ratified it's not like one of my children can go and do that because the will's been done that's Paul's logic he's saying there is a covenant this will that's been done and that whatever comes afterwards doesn't change it so here are the two things he's going to describe the covenant that's been ratified is God's promise to Abraham it's irrevocable it's unchanging and there is some gold here and then he's going to say the law which came afterwards that doesn't doesn't change the nature of this promise

[10:39] God made to Abraham so let's look at what this promise is verse 16 now the promises there were multiple promises God made to Abraham about God blessing all the nations in Abraham and in one of his offspring now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring and then Paul does something really kind of nerdy it does not say and to offsprings referring to many but referring to one and to your offspring who is Christ Paul is not just getting techno nerd because he's interested in these things the whole argument depends on it what he's saying is based upon the grammar of the Hebrew in Genesis chapter 12 and Genesis chapter 22 because offspring is not plural but singular what this means is God made a promise to Abraham's one offspring to bless all the nations of the world and what he means by that is to bring salvation to pour out his grace to justify the nations by faith he's going to God is going to do this through one of Abraham's offspring you ready for the eureka moment who is Christ it's almost like what he's saying this one offspring that God promised all the blessings of Abraham is Christ here's what he's saying that way back when that covenant was made God made it to Abraham's offspring who was Christ and so what Paul's saying is way back in Genesis 12 this promise to bless all the nations of the world through the offspring who is Christ was ratified and God ratified it by swearing by himself 22:7 in other words what we're being told here is from the very beginning God had covenanted that he is going to save the nations through Christ sign sealed delivered done that's in play and that then raises the question well what about the law and so that's where Paul goes this is what I mean the law in verse 17 which came 430 years

afterwards does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God so as to make the promise void this promise that God made to Abraham's offspring who is Christ is not made null and void by the coming of all 613 commands of Moses on Mount Sinai 430 years later those laws don't nullify this promise speaking of that promise in verse 18 for if the inheritance comes by the law it's no longer comes by promise but God gave it to Abraham by a promise that's how it was ratified it's interesting he uses the word inheritance here in verse 18 that's heir language an heir h-e-i-r receives an inheritance and the inheritance he's speaking of is all the blessings of God's salvation in the offspring Christ that's the inheritance that inheritance doesn't come by the law obedience to the law it comes it was given by a promise okay what's interesting about verse 18 but God gave it's not that word gave it's not the typical Greek word for gave it's it's an interesting Greek word it at its core it has this word grace to it God graced to Abraham the promise this this covenant he made to Abraham's offspring Christ to bless all the nations of the world is by grace not by law so what Paul is doing here is saying hey you got to be clear on what this promise God made to Abraham really is it's a promise to Christ and that's unalterable by whatever comes after it so Paul is clarifying for us the relationship between

[16:08] God's promise to Abraham and the law of Moses because if you are in Christ you're no longer under the law you know what this means when God promised to Abraham to his offspring to Christ to bless all the nations of the world he had you in mind way back then he had you in mind he wanted you he's always wanted you that's the first point Paul wants to convince us no that this promise in Christ is not changed or altered at all by the law of Moses now it raises a question doesn't it what's the point of the law then look at verse 19

Paul's like hey I'm a step ahead of you why then the law what's the point of it what's the purpose of it well there's a couple things I want to draw out for you right now the first thing I want you to see is the word until in verse 19 why then the law it was added because of transgressions you see it until until what until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made and who is that he's already told us Christ so what he's starting to say here is why then the law well it serves a temporary purpose until Christ comes until you don't believe me look at verse 23 now before faith came it's talking it's a shorthand for talking about the coming of Christ we were held captive under the law imprisoned until the coming faith

Jesus would be revealed still don't buy it look at verse 24 so then the law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith the law came after God's gospel promise the gospel that was preached beforehand the law came after as a temporary provision until Christ came the Bible speaks of a plan of the fullness of time this is Ephesians 1:10 that is realized in Jesus Christ it's all about Jesus so there's this until functioning of the law it's temporary provision until the coming of Christ the offspring the one who is promised but now look at verse 19 we read why then the law it was added because of transgressions transgressions is just another religious way of talking about that part of our human hearts that seek to rebel against

God sin in us so what Paul is saying here is the law doesn't eradicate the promise but it was given added for a temporary measure because of transgressions and what he plays out in verses 23 and 24 and 25 is how the law functions and so in verse 22 we read but the scripture which is synonymous with the law in this context but the scripture it imprisoned everything under sin so what the law does is it doesn't free us the law imprisons us until Christ comes it's the picture of a jailer and we see it showing up again in verse 23 now before

Christ came we were held captive under the law imprisoned until the coming faith this all this blessing promised to Abraham's offspring in Christ until that was revealed we were imprisoned held captive we were under the jailer of the law let me out now you got to understand how this works because Paul makes it very clear in Romans chapter 7 the law isn't the bad guy you're like wait hold on a second the law imprisons me that makes the law bad no actually the law was from God do you know why we get imprisoned by the law the law exposes our sinfulness it's our sin that gets imprisoned sin in us gets exposed by all 613 commands of the

[21:42] Mosaic law it shows us again and again the sinfulness of our sin in Romans 7 Paul says I would have not known what covetousness really is until I came across the command not to covet it shows us the sinfulness

of our sin it imprisons us it enslaves us it captives holds us captive it it it makes you realize the more you know of God's law the more you realize how far and how frequent you fall short of what God requires in his holiness and the more you realize the more bars there are the more you realize there's no way I can obey my way out of this I'm condemned by my own attempts at obedience and what the law does it exposes us we're law breakers we're transgressors we're rightfully held captive by the law because we're law breakers but that's just one picture of how the law functions there's another picture it's in verse 24 so then the law was our guardian until

Christ came verse 25 but now that faith has come we are no longer under a guardian when you hear the word guardian you maybe think of well that's kind of prison guard ish it's kind of the jailer thing well it's it's not what this guardian is is more like if you're familiar with the legal system and caring for children it's more like a guardian ad litem someone who is put given responsibility for children it's it's like a glorified nanny or au pair and so this guardian according to the kind of first century Roman Greco Roman culture this back in the day this these these guardians they were typically men and they're typically household slaves so they were living within a household and their job was to make sure the children of the household of the master they did their chores they did their schoolwork they minded their manners and usually they were known for doing it with kind of an iron fist and so what you have here is a picture of someone who is kind of a restrainer of wrongdoing and someone who is always minding you and so these two pictures are of a jailer who imprisons us and of this kind of glorified au pair that is trying to restrain us to some degree but keep an eye on us and what

Paul makes clear especially with a guardian is that they're temporary until until Christ comes until Christ comes we're under the law the jailer until Christ comes we're under the supervision the the care of the guardian but what becomes clear in verse 21 is this it's what the law is incapable of doing is the law then contrary to the promises of God this the blessing of God on Abraham's offspring Christ is it opposed to that no it's not opposed to that but then he says for if a law had been given that could give life then righteousness would indeed be by the law but it can't Paul's point is saying none of the 613 laws of Moses none of them when obeyed or attempted to be obeyed can give anybody spiritual life run

God run God run the law demands but gives us neither feet nor hands the law is incapable of giving sinners spiritual life it just racks up over time how I fail and fall short that's what the law does really well it exposes my sinfulness and it keeps me from going over the deep end but it doesn't give me life so one is left saying oh I want life the law is incapable of changing a stony heart into a fleshy heart that wants to obey God the law doesn't do that the spirit of God does that it's part of the new covenant that was accomplished through the death and resurrection of

Jesus and that's why you see in verse 22 what the scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe what the law does do is make you long for life freedom deliverance from this prison get me out of this au pair oversight until Christ comes if you are in Christ you're not under this law anymore because Christ has come and to that end let me bring you now we Paul has clarified the difference between this promise to

[28:03] Abraham that is realized in Christ he's pointed out now what the law could never do and how the law can point us to Christ that is the best it can do but now he turns to promise fulfilled in verses 25 through 29 he's saying here's how this promise to Abraham in Christ has been fulfilled and in this passage there are just gems for your identity in Christ let me point you to several if you're in Christ you're not under the law you are in the midst of God's blessing in verse 25 we read this excuse me verse 24 so then the law was our garden until

Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith the first reality of your gospel identity that Paul identifies is that you're justified by faith that's who you are in Christ now here's what that means to be declared righteous by God the judge of all things for all time the moment a sinner puts their faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ God makes a declaration it's legal it's irrevocable it's binding always and it defines you that declaration is this that based upon your faith in Jesus all of your sin has been put on Christ in all of God's wrath curse for your sin has been poured out on

Christ so there's no more wrath forgiven of your sin that's just part of it God simultaneously thinks of all of Christ's righteousness his 33 years of perfect living he thinks of that righteousness as now credited to you so in that one moment you believe God simultaneously says based upon the finished work of Christ this sinner is now completely forgiven of all sin and completely righteous in my sight because of the righteousness of Christ that's who you are that's what Christ has done and your faith binds you to that so the first thing you need to know about your identity is that you're justified the second thing is in verse 26 but he goes but now that faith has come we're no longer under a guardian for in

Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith it's interesting he says you're in Christ now Christian you're in Christ to be out of Christ means you haven't exercised faith in Christ which means all of God's wrath is still hanging over your head and Christ's righteousness instead of being imputed to you actually exposes you but to be in Christ means you've realized oh I need I need only what Christ offers and I'm going to trust him and at that moment you trust him God thinks of you as being in Christ now here's why that's significant do you remember back in 3 16 that that that the promise of Abraham to his offspring to bless with all of God's gracious blessing saving blessing that that is in the offspring in

Christ so when God sees faith he thinks of a sinner now in Christ and with now the recipient of all of the blessings in that offspring in Christ and the way to get into Christ from being out of Christ is right there in verse 26 it's through faith you don't earn your way in you don't obey the law into Christ the covenant the promise doesn't come through the law it's in Christ so we've been justified we're in Christ by faith and then in verse 26 in the middle of that we read for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith you are all sons of God through faith now if you're a lady in the room and you're a believer in

[33:18] Jesus you're kind of like well that's interesting it's kind of like when men read Ephesians 5 and we read about okay the church is the bride of Christ it's kind of like okay I don't feel bridey but he's getting out of relationship and so when we read sons of God sisters you're sons of God you're like how is that don't think gender think heir back in the first century the first born son was the recipient of all the inheritance from the father what Paul is saying is that everyone who's in Christ is a first born son of God recipient of all the inheritance that's in Christ Jesus you following me so everyone in this room regardless of your race your culture regardless of your economic standing despite whether you're employed or not employed or partially employed despite if you're a man or you're a woman if you're old or young or somewhere in the middle you know what if you're in

Christ you're a son of God you're an heir Paul is wanting to emphasize that but now that faith has come we're no longer under a garden now that Christ has come you're in Christ sons of God through faith there's something else verse 27 for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ you might be thinking okay how does all this stuff work how is it that I can be considered an heir of God in Christ Jesus descended of Abraham when I'm a Gentile the apostle Paul says for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ what baptism is is a symbol it is a symbol of being united to

Christ Christ so when we baptize people in Lake Michigan I'm standing out in the water with them and I ask them hey have you put your faith in Jesus yes I have you going to follow him all the days of your life yes I am I'm like well based on your profession of faith I baptize you in the name of the Father Son Holy Spirit and I say united with Christ in his death work of Christ you're united to his death so that you too are dead to sin and law and you're united to his resurrection so that you too have a new life given to you so you can live for God that's the baptism language you're united to Christ you're justified you're in Christ you're son of God you're united to Christ and since you're united to

Christ baptized you put on Christ I am a white middle aged middle class husband and father none of them is my ultimate identity because I've put on Christ I'm united to Christ so this put on language is like putting on clothing language so you see somebody walk in here and they're wearing Packers regalia top to bottom do you know what they're saying I identify myself with the Packers someone wearing Bears garb I'm in I'm wrapped up in the Bears or Badgers fans I'm wrapped up with the

Badgers or Ohio State fans point being when you wrap yourself up with something it's your identity our identity is

Christ so Christ informs my whiteness Christ informs my middle classness Christ informs my middle classness my husbanding and my parenting and my pastoring none of those are my ultimate definition because I've put on Christ because I'm united to him because I'm in him I'm his son I've been justified it doesn't end there in verse 28 there's neither Jew nor Greek there's neither slave nor free there's no male and female for you all are one in Christ we are one in Christ with everyone who's been united to Christ so which means this if Christ is what defines me most now anyone who's been united to

[38:57] Christ is defined by Christ now which means not sameness in a church it means unity in the midst of diversity in which we are saying what is most important and what unites us above and beyond all else is Christ in us and then in verse 29 if you are Christ then you are Abraham's offspring heirs according to promise he's bringing it all the way around baby if you belong to Christ if you are Christ by faith united to him if you put him on you're one in him with everybody else you are sons you are in him you're justified by faith in what he's done if that's the case you're his you might have come in here this morning saying

I don't know who I belong to God does you belong to Christ so much so you've been so united to Christ it blurs it because you get called Abraham's singular offspring too father Abraham had many sons and many sons had father Abraham I am one of them and so are you so let's all praise the Lord Jesus okay let me just point out something verse 23 we're not under the law imprisoned until the faith would be revealed that's referenced to Christ being revealed verse 24 so then the law was our guardian until

Christ came second reference to Christ in order that we might be justified by faith but now that faith has come we're no longer under a guardian for in Christ Jesus third time Christ is referenced 27 for as many of you as were baptized into Christ I believe that's the fourth time have put on Christ I think that's the fifth time verse 29 and if you are Christ six times then you are Abraham's offspring heirs according to promise it's all about Christ it's all about being in the offspring of Abraham and whom God has promised all of his blessings to fall it's all about Christ in other words your blessing is not in the law it's in Christ if you belong to Christ you are not under the law so this morning we've seen Paul's case to convince us that we're in

Christ he sought to clarify for us the promise made he sought to clarify the role of the law the promise heightened he sought to clarify the promise fulfilled in us in which is our identity Christ so if you came in here suffering some gospel amnesia shake it off you've just forgotten who you are in Christ but God's word reminds us with clarity of who we are in Christ and all that he's done for us you don't need to walk away slouching your head around under the law you leave here holding your head up high because you're in Christ and that's been secured by a promise that God has made himself if you're realizing that you're not in

Christ stick around afterwards come out come talk to me I'll help you understand how you become a Christian let me pray for us God in heaven we thank you so much for Galatians chapter 3 verses 15 through 29 I pray that God you would take these truths and you would press them into my brothers and sisters and in me too so that this week all throughout this week we remember who we are because of what Christ has done and we live in that freedom ask this in Jesus name amen never no no