Galatians 3:15-22

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Preacher: Greg Hendrickson

[0:00] Amen. Please turn with me in your Bibles to Galatians chapter 3. We are reading Galatians chapter 3 verse 15 through 26 found on page 973 of the Bibles in the pews if you want to look on in one of those. We've been in the book of Galatians for the last couple of months and are almost to the halfway point. But today we're looking at Galatians chapter 3 starting at verse 15.

Let me read for us. To give a human example brothers even with a man-made covenant no one annuls it or adds to it once it has been ratified. Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say and to offsprings referring to many but referring to one and to your offspring who is Christ. This is what I mean. The law which came 430 years afterward does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God so as to make the promise void. For if the inheritance comes by the law it no longer comes by promise but God gave it to Abraham by a promise.
Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made and it was put in place through angels by an intermediary.
Now an intermediary implies more than one but God is one. Is the law then contrary to the promises of God? Certainly not. For if a law had been given that could give life then righteousness would indeed be by the law. But the scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. Now before faith came we were held captive under the law imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then the law was our guardian until Christ came in order that we might be justified by faith. But now that faith has come we are no longer under a guardian. For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. If you've been in New Haven for any length of time and you like to eat meat you might have found your way to Ferraro's Market at some point just a few blocks away on Grand Avenue. Ferraro's is a fascinating place for several reasons but one of the things that you might notice there is that after you go through the checkout line on your way out the exit door painted on the wall in large print are the Ten Commandments. Not exactly what you would expect to see at your local supermarket perhaps but there they are and it might make you wonder why the Ten Commandments? What's so important about them? According to surveys most American Christians do not know the Ten Commandments by heart but in the history of the church the Ten Commandments were regularly taught as part of basic Christian instruction for children and for new converts.
So the Ten Commandments are included and explained in the catechism of the Catholic Church, in Luther's small catechism, the Heidelberg Catechism, a Reformed catechism, the Westminster Catechism, and the Baptist Catechism. They appear twice in the Old Testament first in Exodus 20 and then again in Deuteronomy 5.
[3:30] But again you might ask why? The Ten Commandments were given long ago to the people of Israel. Why are they important for Christians? What role does the law play now that Jesus has come?

And today's passage which we just read addresses this very question. Now this passage doesn't tell us everything about the purpose of the law but it does tell us two things. First it tells us what the law doesn't do and second it tells us what the law does. So first in verses 15 through 21 we see that God's law doesn't modify or cancel out God's promises. Now Paul's argument in this passage is a little tricky because it's dense and compact. Even as I read it maybe you felt that way. He moves back and forth between different threads of his argument like a weaver or someone who's knitting an intricate pattern. But his argument does hang together in the end. So let's dive in together and look starting at verse 15. Verse 15 Paul makes an analogy to a covenant or a will. That's the same word in Greek.
So if your parents make a will and in their will they say that when they die all the money in their bank accounts goes to your older brother and their stamp collection goes to you. If they die you

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cannot do anything to change that. You may or may not like that but you can't add to or subtract from a will once the person has died because it has been ratified. And Paul says if it's this way with a human will or covenant how much more so with God's covenant or God's promise. God doesn't go back on his promises. God made a promise to Abraham long ago and he will carry it through. In Genesis chapter 17 verse 8 God said to Abraham I will give to you and to your offspring after you all the land of Canaan for an everlasting possession and I will be their God. Now you might ask has God fulfilled that promise or how should we expect him to fulfill that promise? And in verse 16 Paul says that this promise and all the promises that God made to Abraham find their truest fulfillment in the person of Jesus
Christ. Now you might be confused when you first read verse 16 because at first what Paul says doesn't quite seem to make sense. Paul says the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. And then he says it does not say and to offsprings referring to many. In other words it doesn't refer to all of Abraham's physical descendants but it refers to one person. He says and to your offspring who is Jesus Christ. Now the problem is the word offspring in Hebrew, Greek, and English is what's called a collective noun. In other words it can refer to one person or it can refer to a group of people. And in fact at the end of this very chapter Paul uses that same word offspring to refer to a group of people. In verse 29 he says you are Abraham's offspring heirs plural according to the promise. So what's Paul doing here? Well Paul isn't making a grammatical argument saying that the word offspring can never refer to a group of people. What he's doing he's making an interpretive argument saying the promises God made to Abraham and to his offspring find their truest fulfillment in Jesus Christ the offspring the descendant of
Abraham. So for example what does this mean? In that passage in the verse I just read from Genesis God promised the land of Canaan as an everlasting possession to Abraham and his offspring. And some people both back then and even today would say that promise will be fulfilled when Abraham's physical descendants or the Jewish nation controls the whole land of Canaan up to the borders outlined in the book of Deuteronomy. But Paul actually says no. The ultimate fulfillment of that promise to Abraham that his offspring will inherit the land is when Jesus the true offspring of Abraham reigns over the whole world. See the Old Testament shows God's promises to Abraham partially fulfilled in the history of Israel but the ultimate fulfillment of those promises comes with Jesus. When Jesus rose from the dead he said to his disciples all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. And one day when Jesus comes back he will reign in the new Jerusalem in the new heavens and the new earth forever.
[8:27] And that will be the ultimate fulfillment of God's promise to Abraham. So Paul's saying we can inherit we can share in these promises to Abraham simply by trusting in Jesus. Because Jesus is the offspring the promised offspring of Abraham. Now verse 17 Paul goes back to what he was saying in verse 15.

Again it's a little tricky it's very compact but he goes back to what he was saying in verse 15. The law doesn't cancel out God's promise. But here in this verse instead of making an analogy to a human will he makes an argument based on the storyline of the Bible. As Nick was said to us in his sermon last week the Bible isn't just an encyclopedia of information or a long list of rules for us to follow.
It's an unfolding story of God's redemptive plan for the world. So Paul isn't just sort of picking random verses or random ideas from the Old Testament and arranging them to advance his agenda.
He's reading the Bible as an unfolding story of God's redemptive plan. And if you're trying to read through the Old Testament you need to read it in that way too. You know if you just pick up your Bible tomorrow morning and turn to Leviticus or Ezekiel or Ecclesiastes and try to find your inspiring thought for the day you might have some trouble. Now maybe you tried that a long time maybe you tried reading the Old Testament a long time ago and you got bogged down in Leviticus or the numbers the censuses and numbers or the genealogies and chronicles and you've just given up on the Old Testament or you just stick with Psalms and Proverbs and the New Testament and let everything else go. But you know don't give up if you're doing that you're missing out. Don't give up on the Old Testament because the Old Testament is the Bible that Jesus and his disciples read. And Jesus said that every book in the Old Testament points forward to him. And if you see the Old Testament as a story an unfolding story of God's redemptive plan then gradually the pieces will begin to fit together as you read the different books. If you want to learn more you can come and

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join our Old Testament Sunday school class.
We're about halfway through the Old Testament but there's plenty of room to join every week at 9 a.m. Now what Paul is saying two of the key points in this Old Testament story are one God's promises to Abraham found in the book of Genesis and two the giving of the law through Moses at Mount Sinai in the book of Exodus. And in verses 17 through 20 Paul points out three important differences between these two key events in the Old Testament. The promise to Abraham and the law given to Moses.
[11:21] So three important differences that Paul points out. And all of these reinforce the point that the law the promise or the law doesn't cancel out the promise. So verse 17 Paul points out the promise came first the law came later. So the promise to Abraham is like the foundation of a new building. Once you lay a solid foundation you don't turn around and rip it up. That would be really stupid. But the law is sort of like the scaffolding. It's necessary when a building's under construction but when the building is complete you take the scaffolding down because it's only meant to be temporary. So in the same way the promise to Abraham is meant to be an enduring foundation but the law is only a temporary role.

It plays only a temporary role like scaffolding. In verse 19 Paul says it was added until the offspring should come to whom the promise had been made. So the promise came first law came later. Second Paul points out in verse 19 that the promise came directly to Abraham from God. The law came through angels by an intermediary. Now who's the intermediary? The intermediary is Moses. Right? The law came through Moses. Through angels by Moses to the people. In other words the promise came first hand from God. God came to Abraham directly and said it directly to him. The law came third hand. Now if you get a message from your boss who got a message from his or her boss who got a message from the CEO of your company you should listen to that message because ultimately it comes from the CEO. But if the CEO comes directly into your office even though he's not your immediate supervisor and he could have sent it down the chain of command but he comes directly into your office to give you a message you better listen up even more. So the promise carries even more weight than the law because it came first hand not third hand. Now verse 20 Paul goes on to make what I think is a parenthetical comment. He says now an intermediary implies more than one but God is one. Now if you read that verse and you thought hmm I don't quite understand why Paul made that comment here you're in good company. One scholar writes this verse has caused great perplexity to commentators. You could probably write a PhD dissertation on all the commentaries that have been written on this verse but the main point of Paul's argument is actually quite clear. Even though the promise came directly from God and the law came through a mediator they both come from one and the same God. God is one. As Paul goes on to say in verse 21 the law is not ultimately contrary to the promises of God. They play two different roles in God's redemptive plan.
So first difference promise came first law came later promise came first hand law came third hand but it still came from the same God and three in verse 18 Paul points out a third difference between the promise and the law and he says they're based on two different operating principles.
Now if you read through the book of Genesis if you read through the story of Abraham and you notice what God says to Abraham you'll notice a recurring phrase and it's I will. God says to Abraham I will make of you a great nation. I will bless you and make your name great. I will bless those who bless you and and I will curse those who curse you. In other words I will protect you. To your offspring I will give this land. I will establish my covenant with you and I will be your God. God makes awesome promises to Abraham. Sovereign gracious promises and God's covenant with Abraham is solid and firm because it ultimately doesn't depend on Abraham. God guarantees that he will make his promise come to pass.
But if you read the book of Exodus about when the law is given to Moses if you read all the laws in the Old Testament you'll find a different recurring phrase. You shall or maybe even more often you shall not. You shall not have any other gods before me. You shall not make any graven images. You shall not murder. Commit adultery. You shall not covet. You shall love the Lord your God.
[16:09] And when God comes to the people of Israel and makes a covenant with them at Mount Sinai it's on a completely different basis. The Lord says if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant then you shall be my treasured possession and you shall be a kingdom of priests. If they obey they'll be blessed. If they disobey they'll be cursed. The outcome is not totally guaranteed by God. It depends on whether or not the people obey. Now of course the problem which the whole

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rest of the Old Testament tells this story is the people don't obey. Over and over. They don't obey. They don't live up to their side of the covenant. And so eventually they get thrown out of the land. They get exiled. As a consequence of their continued disobedience. So Paul says the law and the promise are these two different principles.

God's promise to Abraham solid and sure. The law. It all depends on whether you obey. And the question for the Galatians that Paul was writing to and the question for us today is this. How do we get God's blessing today? How do we know that we're accepted by God? Is it Abraham style by trusting God's promise or is it law style by our works and our obedience?
And Paul says it can't be both ways. It's one way or the other. The law says if I obey then I will be accepted by God. But the promise says I'm accepted by God simply through his grace. And that's why I want to obey him. So Paul's opponents were saying you have to be circumcised and obey the law to be part of God's family. But Paul says no. That's the law way. You know you're part of God's family by trusting God's promise which is fulfilled in Jesus. Jesus is the only one who ever perfectly fulfilled the law.
If you trust in the law you'll never live up to it. Jesus fulfilled the law by trusting in him. That's how you'll be made right with God. And if you've been here so far in our Galatians series you've heard this thing over and over. Paul says we were justified by faith in Jesus Christ not by works of the law. We received the spirit by faith not by observing the law. Abraham was justified by faith not by observing the law. Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law. The inheritance comes by the promise not by the law. Now if you're following so far the law doesn't cancel out God's promise. All God's blessings come to us through Jesus. You might ask well so does the law matter at all? Is Paul just saying get rid of the law? Is Paul saying it doesn't matter what you do you can do whatever you want? There's no law anymore. As Paul says in verse 19 he says why then the law? [19:30] So we've seen what the law doesn't do but now Paul's showing us what the law does do. Because remember the law and the promise both come from the one and the same God. So the law does have an important purpose and in verses 22 through 25 Paul is going to show us that purpose. Why the law?

Now Paul uses two metaphors in these verses to describe the purpose of the law. And I'm actually going to take them in reverse order. So I'm going to start with verses 24 and 25. Paul uses a child rearing metaphor. He says the law is like a guardian. Now if you notice throughout this passage, throughout this passage that we've read, Paul has introduced several words related to family life. Verse 15 he addresses the Galatians as brothers, brothers and sisters in God's family. Then he refers to Jesus as Abraham's offspring. In verse 18 he used the term inheritance. And then finally in verse 26 he talks about becoming sons of God, children of God through faith. Paul has already described our relationship with God in chapters 2 and 3 through a legal metaphor, justification. But Paul's setting the stage for another metaphor that also describes our relationship with Jesus, adoption. And we'll get more into this in future weeks. But I want to just point out that family language that Paul's introducing which we'll see more and more of in the next few weeks. But here he compares the law to a guardian.
Now in the ancient world, wealthy families would hire a guardian to oversee their children during the school age years, from about six years old until the beginning of adulthood, somewhere in during the teenage years. And the guardian was responsible for all aspects of a child's life. Supervision, education, discipline, and protection, until the child became a full-fledged adult. And when Paul compares the law to a guardian, he emphasizes the temporary nature of the guardian's role. The law was our guardian until Christ came. Now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. So in other words, the law plays an important role, but it's not ultimate. It's only a means to a greater end. Think about it this way.
For those of us who are parents, we're all trying to figure out how to raise our kids. Maybe some of you who've been at it longer than we haven't figured it out, but well we're still figuring it out. And we know, and we all know that for a limited amount of time, we're in a position of authority over our children.
But at some point, they're all going to grow up, and they're going to leave home, and do their thing. And our role in their lives will gradually shift from authority to influence. So how do we make the most of the time that we have to raise our children well, and point them in a godly direction? Well if you think about it in the framework of this passage, there are basically three ways that we can raise our children with regard to God's law. So one way would be the law-less approach. In other words,

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no rules, just love. It's the permissive approach, or the child-centered approach, where the child makes the real decisions, the parents build their life around the children. And of course, if you look around, this is becoming more and more common in our world today. But the obvious problem is that it tends to foster self-centered and undisciplined children who then become self-centered and undisciplined adults, under the lawless approach. And so, so that's one approach. The second approach would be the law-driven approach. You teach your kids right and wrong, you expect them to obey right away, every time, you reward them when they do good, you punish them when they do bad, you watch out for and separate them from corrupting or distracting influences, teach them to work hard, be polite, and respect other people. Now most people think that the Christian way of parenting is basically that second way. But Paul is actually pointing to a third way, a different way than either the first way or the second way. He's pointing to a gospel-driven approach. Now in this approach, the law still has a role to play. So you still teach your kids what's right and wrong, correct and discipline them as appropriate, protect them from distracting or corrupting influences when necessary. But you know that the law in itself, commands, rewards, punishments, all those things are not going to be enough.
[24:24] Because your children, just like you, are sinners who cannot live up to God's law, who need Jesus more than anything else. And so you pray for your children that they would know and treasure Jesus above everything else. You teach your children not only what God requires of us, how to be a good person, but also what Christ has done for us.

And for you and for them. Someone was telling me recently that Matt Chandler, who's a pastor in Texas, goes through the Ten Commandments regularly with his children at the end of the day. They recite them together.
And then he turns to them and he says, So how did you do today? How many of them have you kept? Did you obey all ten?
Perfectly? And if they say, well, I messed up here, I messed up there. He says, that's, I want you to know, that's why Jesus died on the cross.
Because you can never live up to God's law all by yourself. Or sometimes as a parent, we may even need to acknowledge our own sin to our children.
[25:51] If you've blown up in anger, or wronged them in some way. You know, someone else was telling me recently that he understood the gospel most clearly from his parents.

Because they admitted when they had been wrong. And they confessed their own need for Christ's forgiveness. See, the law is a good thing. The law is an important thing.
Teaching right and wrong is necessary. But just like a guardian or even a human parent, the law has a necessary but limited role. And it's ultimately meant to lead us to put our trust in Christ.
So the law is like a guardian that leads us to Jesus. That's the first metaphor. The second metaphor Paul uses is in verses 22 and 23.
It's a judicial metaphor. He says, the law is like a prison sentence. The scripture imprisoned everything under sin, he says in verse 22.
[26:57] We were held captive under the law, imprisoned. Now, I don't know if you've ever been to visit someone in jail. Or if you've ever, perhaps you've even been in jail yourself.

But if you've even been to visit, you know that living in jail, it's a whole different world. At many prisons, the whole compound is surrounded by high fences with three layers of barbed wire at the top, spotlights and cameras around the perimeter, concrete buildings with tiny windows that only let in cracks of light.
And life within a prison is incredibly restricted. You can only eat or drink at certain times. You can only go outside for recreation at certain times. You can only call people, collect. You can only have visitors once a day, and not at all on holidays.
You know, if you go to visit an inmate at the New Haven prison on Whaley Avenue, just a block or two past stop and shop, in one of the divisions, you can't even be in the same room as them to visit them.
You have to sit at a counter in front of a plexiglass window, look at them through the window, and pick up a phone and talk to them on the other side of the phone. Now, the prison system may do a good job at containing people temporarily.
[28:12] But I think everyone would agree that it doesn't do a good job of changing people from the inside out. According to the Christian Ministry Prison Fellowship, nationwide, about 700,000 inmates are released from prison every year.

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Two-thirds of these will eventually return to prison, with about half doing so within three years of release. Many people come out of prison worse and not better, more angry and more hardened. And you can see the same pattern in other kinds of institutions that are based on law and external control. You know, I've talked to alcoholics who've gone through 10 or 20 rehab programs, and they're still drinking.
You know, just going to a rehab program where you're cut off from the outside world for 90 days might prevent you from using alcohol and drugs during that time, but it won't take away.
It won't change your heart in itself. It won't set you free from your cravings and your addiction unless you're chained from the inside out. You'll go back to your old addiction, or you'll just find a different addiction to replace it.
[29:23] And functionally, that's what most rehab programs end up doing. If you talk to people who work at rehab programs, they'll be honest. They'll say, a lot of the time, we end up substituting a more socially acceptable addiction for a drug or alcohol addiction.

Now, of course, prisons and rehab programs are not bad things in themselves. They are necessary at times. Prisons are necessary in order to contain violent criminals, prevent them from harming others.
Rehab programs are useful to prevent people from following through on their own compulsive desires for drugs and alcohol. Sometimes you need that. But they're only temporary.
Who wants to live in a rehab program for the rest of your life? Nobody does. And in the same way, God's law and even civil laws do restrain us from carrying out our worst tendencies out of fear of judgment.
One commentator says, God's law prevents us from escaping to a futile and illusory freedom. It prevents us from escaping to a false kind of freedom.
[30:31] But it doesn't give us freedom. Now, you might ask, well, okay, I get the idea, but how exactly is God's law like a prison sentence? Well, start with the Ten Commandments.

They're at the heart of the Old Testament law. And surely they reflect God's character and they express God's desire for his redeemed people and how he wants us to live. But if we take them seriously, they also expose our bondage to sin.
So think about it. Commandment number six, you shall not murder. Well, most of us haven't killed anyone. But Jesus says, if you're angry with your brother or sister, you've committed murder in your heart.
Have you ever been angry with someone wanting to hurt them? Have you ever held a grudge against someone? You know, according to the Bible, no one else can make you angry.
They might provoke you to anger, but anger comes out of the heart. Or commandment number eight, you shall not steal.
[31:42] Well, many of us would say, well, I'm okay here. I don't cheat on my taxes. I don't shoplift. I haven't plagiarized. But have you ever tried to take credit for something that somebody else did?

Or have you ever tried to blame someone else for something that was really your fault? Or have you hoarded or squandered your money or your resources instead of giving generously?
According to the Bible, all those things are stealing. Commandment number ten, you shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor.
How many times have you thought, if only I could be as smart as he is. If only I could be as thin as she is.
If only I could be as rich as they are. If only I could have what they have. And all this is coveting.
[32:49] And see, this is only the beginning. I've only gone through three out of ten. Quickly. And God sees all of our sins all at once. Even those sins that we have conveniently forgotten over time.

And according to the law, he will hold us to account for everything that we have ever thought, said, or done. You see, if we take God's law seriously, we will see that we are far more deeply flawed than we ever wanted to admit.
The Bible says that we are in bondage to sin. And we can't set ourselves free. So the law is like an expert diagnosis that pinpoints not simply the symptoms, but the actual root cause of a disease.
You know, a diagnosis alone doesn't make you any better. And in fact, when you hear a bad diagnosis, you might feel worse. But you need a correct diagnosis because otherwise you will pursue false remedies or you will only address symptoms without addressing the root cause of the wrong.

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And it's the same way with God's law. God's law diagnoses our true spiritual condition. It doesn't let us get away with superficial answers like blaming others or blaming our circumstances or minimizing our guilt.
[34:10] It reveals that our hearts are in bondage to sin and we cannot free ourselves. If we look to the future under the law, the law holds up a holy and pure standard that we can never hope to fully live up to.

And if we look back at the past, the law threatens us with God's just punishment for all the sins that we have ever committed. Under the law, we're all locked up with no hope of ever getting out.
But the good news is there is a way out. And it's not through the law. It's not through any of our efforts. It's simply through faith in Jesus, the only one who perfectly obeyed the law, trusting in his work on our behalf.
That's what verse 22 says. The scripture imprisoned everything under sin so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to all who believe. The point of the law is not to make us despair and perish eternally.
The point is to bring us to the end of ourselves so that we stop trusting in ourselves and trust in Jesus alone. Martin Luther wrote, the principal point of the law is to make people not better but worse.
[35:20] That is to say, it shows them their sin. That by knowing their sin, they may be humbled, terrified, bruised, and broken. And by this means may be driven to seek grace.

And so come to that blessed seed who is Jesus Christ. You know, if you live in a city like New Haven, it's almost impossible to get a clear view of the stars at night because we're surrounded by tall buildings and artificial light.
But if you go far out of the city to a place where there are no street lights and you step outside on a moonless night, you will feel the darkness in a way that you will never feel here in New Haven.
And that's exactly what God's law does. It shows us, it reveals our own spiritual darkness. But at the same time, if you're out in the middle of nowhere, in the pitch black darkness, and you look up into the sky, you will see the stars like you can never see them here.
You will see the stars just like Abraham did so long ago. Shining with the light of God's faithful promises. About a year ago, we had someone come to Trinity and he spoke here and he had been in prison.
[36:43] He had been convicted at one point earlier in his life of running a major drug dealing operation and he said that one of the good things for him about being in prison was that it gave him a lot of time to think. And locked in his cell, lying on his bed, he saw a message one day that someone had scribbled on the corner of the bunk bed above him.

If you're bored, read Jeremiah 29 11. So he found a Bible, opened it up, and turned to Jeremiah and he read these words. For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord.
Plans to prosper you and not to harm you. Plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart.
I will be found by you and I will bring you back from captivity. And he wrote this in his autobiography. The thought that God could restore me and bring me back from captivity resonated deep within my spirit.
At this point, the world would be happy for me to be locked away for good. And yet, God was saying something completely different. He wanted to be a part of my life. No matter who I was or what I had done, he didn't see me simply as a criminal or as a number.
[37:58] He saw me and he gave me hope. For the rest of my life, I would live with this felony on my record. But with Jesus, I had no record. I had no debt to be paid. I had no shameful past.

Whether or not you've ever committed a crime that deserves prison, before the law of God, we're all locked up. But no matter who you are, no matter what you've done, you can have a new identity before God.
You can have freedom by trusting in Jesus Christ. Because when Jesus died on the cross, he took your record so that you could have his. He served the death sentence so that you and I could have life now and forever.
He paid our debt so that you and I could be set free. So don't delay. Turn to him today. Don't stay in the prison of the law. Reach out to him in faith.

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Receive his promise of forgiveness and eternal life. The law imprisons, but Christ liberates. In the words of an old hymn, Long my imprisoned spirit lay, fast bound in sin and nature's night. [39:00] Thine eye diffused a quickening ray. I woke, the dungeon flamed with light. My chains fell off. My heart was free. I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Lord, we thank you for the law that unpleasant though it first seems to us as it exposes the depths of our sin, our spiritual darkness, our bondage, to self-centeredness and idolatry.
We thank you for how it points us to our Savior, to Jesus Christ. Lord, we pray, I pray that we might take hold of him today, that we might know the freedom that comes from Jesus Christ because of his death and his resurrection.
Lord Jesus, thank you that you have not left us simply under the law, but that you have fulfilled your promise, the promise you gave to Abraham, and that we can enter into that promise and receive forgiveness and eternal life in you.
We pray that that might be true for us today and that we might live in that joy and gratitude for what you have done for us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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