

GOODNEWS LETTER

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INHERITING

Scripture speaks often of inheriting. There are many blessings in God's inheritance including, "Eternal Life," the "Earth," the "Kingdom of God" and/or "heaven."

Every blessing begins and ends with Jesus Christ, God's Son, the heir of Abraham's promise that God issued in Genesis 12 and 17. Upon fulfilling the Law that God gave at Mount Sinai, Jesus became the guarantee of the promise that man will receive control over death, hell and the grave and take control of the earth as was intended when God placed Adam in the Garden of Eden.

Here's the Scriptural account: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us...in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith," Galatians 3:13-14.

In the above passage, a few points must be clarified

1) - Jesus **redeemed all the saved** from the curse of the Law; not, merely the members of the churches of Galatians that Paul addressed.

2) - Once the Law is removed (which, is necessary before redemption can occur) the blessings come upon all who trust in God's provision; even, Gentiles. God had a larger view of redemption than what the Jews ever envisioned. "**We be Abraham's seed**" applies to every saved person who is in faith; not only the Jews to whom the promise was originally given (See Acts 13).

3) - Notice the phrase: "**the promise of the Spirit, through faith.**" This means that, as long as the flesh is alive, the Law will be alongside, actively denying freedom to man's spirit.

While, the desire of man is to have freedom, his spirit remains in bondage to the flesh; which, the Law confirms, over and over again. The law and the flesh must die together. That happens when the flesh is crucified with Christ at Calvary.

The Law dies because it was fulfilled by the perfect sacrifice of Christ. The Law no longer holds man from God, once faith trusts in Christ. We are redeemed from the curse; not by actually dying but, by dying to sin when we repent and God grants forgiveness. It's by grace, isn't it? **AMEN!**

However, being born of God carries a great privilege of honoring the Lord, God. The Bible records that not all sons inherit. Ishmael was cast out; Esau sold his birthright; and, loose living will cause many to **"not inherit the kingdom of God"** (Gal 5:21).

As detailed in GoodNews Letter, number 214, **"Poking Fun At The Heir,"** not all born sons will be heirs together; not of the same promise, that is. Sarah and Hagar's offspring vividly reveal this truth. The fact that Ishmael mocked Isaac, the heir, was not the reason he was cast out; God is showing us that we must have the correct mother - New Jerusalem, which is above. But, mocking comes naturally and Ishmael was born naturally. He mocked because he was a product of his mother, Hagar, a bondwoman.

The allegorical meaning is that fleshly works never produce faithful results. When exposed, works of the flesh must be defended and mocking of the heir is the first response of the flesh. When Isaac had his party and received the robe of family inheritance, sin revived and, rather than repent, the flesh mocked.

Doesn't the flesh mock us, now and then? It certainly does, denying our faith at every turn. It even casts doubt that we were ever saved, at times. Thus, when Satan shows up, we must drive him away by quoting Scripture, just as Jesus did in the desert temptation of Matthew 4.

It is the nature of our flesh to rebel and mock acts of faith. The flesh cannot stand it when it is excluded. It was the flesh that rose up in Cain that killed Abel. And, it is the flesh that rejects this truth laid out by Paul. Although, many understand that Sarah and Hagar representative the two covenants, they continue under the Law, thinking that they can keep it! Amazing!

It's what the flesh does - REJECT. And, the flesh will also get you a rejection of the firstborn blessing if you continue on in its leading and not follow God's only method of salvation. The flesh has to be crucified and it must be buried.

A very clear teaching on daily living - after one has been saved - is in Paul's letter to the Romans. He said, **"...that we should no longer be slaves to sin"** (6:6). Then, Paul explains the abundant life of those walking in the Spirit - verses 10 - 23; but, instructs us in those verses to **"not let sin reign in your mortal body."** The eighth chapter is very informative. Listen to verse 13, **"For if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live."**

Thus, the allegorical account of the promise shows that Sarah was way past her age of conception when God renewed her womb and a miraculous child was born. Before Isaac was born (some 17 years earlier), Abraham and Sarah believed God; but, they tried to bring the promise about naturally. Sarah gave her handmaid,

Hagar, to her husband and Ishmael was born; not miraculously, but naturally, a work of man, not of God.

Today, as in Abraham's day, God's words are believed - just not understood. Man wants to work it out. He believes that Jesus died for his sin but wants to add his own personal touch to the salvation that Jesus gave him. It may be his church, his practice or a number of other fleshly attempts; but, he keeps on adding to and, thereby, takes away from God's grace.

He believes in a church, but not the church that began in Jerusalem, continuing on until today. He joins a latter day congregation; not knowing, or ever thinking that he is under a delusion "**that they might believe what is false,**" 2nd Thess 2:11.

He knows that baptism is important but places so much religiosity upon the ordinance that he sprinkles water on a child's head. I ask you, "**Is this a burial?**" Try that method at the local cemetery.

In order to direct men away from falsehoods, Paul uses careful words, writing a lot about grace and the Law to the churches of Galatia. Paul knew that these brethren believed God's word; they simply did not understand it. He called them "**Foolish Galatians,**" asking, "**...did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?**" (3:1-2).

Paul really sets the misunderstanding in proper and serious light in chapter 5, verse 4. "**You have been severed from Christ you who are seeking to be justified by Law; you have fallen from grace.**"

That's what Paul said: "**You have fallen from grace.**" People hear these words and believe them; that is, from their view point, which amounts to misunderstanding what Paul is actually saying. Simply, grace and works cannot co-abide. Hagar's son cannot live with Sara's son nor receive the same blessing.

Churches, like those of Galatia, cannot serve God by keeping the Law. Yet, many Christians Churches avow that the Law must be kept; even, teaching that one loses his salvation if we fail to do so. And, it not just the Seventh Day Adventists. There are a lot of Law keeping congregations of various names.

The inheritance is of God's choice. But, I think His choice is dependent upon man's total lost condition. In other words, God's way is the only way because man fails every time. Nevertheless, God lays it out for us to seek, knock and ask; which Jesus said would bring openings and answers. But, we must stick to Scripture - Scripture such as Galatians and its explanation of the differences between **works and promise, law and Spirit, Old and New.** Paul longs for us to receive his teaching. So does this preacher.

Yet, God gives His inheritance to those of His choosing. He chose Abraham to begin the lineage of the Jewish nation of Israel; then, stamped His approval upon this lineage by changing the name of Abraham's grandson, from Jacob to Israel.

We know that Scripture is difficult to understand. After all, it's Spiritual. And, as God's word opens up many roads of truth to follow, we have to be patience with men on Biblical concepts and teachings. But, we also must point out that the church established by Christ not only believes God's word, the church changes to become whatever is dictated. If she sins, she repents. If God leads, she follows.

While, Scripture remains confusing to many readers, even those believers of churches, such as the Galatian Churches, the church that Jesus established listens to "**what the Spirit says to the churches,**" Revelation 3:29.

Jesus taught His church well. He guided Her with Apostolic leadership after His resurrection. He, not only established the New Covenant by shedding His blood at Calvary, Jesus also called church men to pen Scripture, explaining the deepest doctrine. Of course, Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to these men and inspired them. Finally, He sent the Holy Spirit to indwell and endowed the body of Christ - "**that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.**"