


Believing the Promise(s) of God

Galatians 3:15 - 18

Presented by Bob DeWaay
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A Human Analogy

Galatians 3:15 (NASB)

Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is only a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

- Despite the sharp rebukes, Paul calls them "Brothers"
- This is a lesser to greater argument
- The implication is that God keeps His promises

2




Abraham and his "Seed" receive the promise

Galatians 3:16a (NASB)

Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed.

- The first promise is in Genesis 3:15 to the woman
- Abraham is addressed in Genesis 17:4-8
- The Abrahamic promise was confirmed to Isaac and Jacob

3



Christ is the promised 'Seed' of Abraham

Galatians 3:16b

He does not say, 'And to seeds,' as referring to many, but rather to one, 'And to your seed,' that is, Christ

- > This points to the One and the many
- > The concept of corporate solidarity is important in the Bible
- > "Seed" is a collective singular, but Paul wants to emphasize an important point

4

The Abrahamic covenant is a covenant of promise

Galatians 3:17

What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise..

- > The Abrahamic covenant is unconditional
- > The Mosaic covenant is provisional (Deut. 18:15, 18)

5

Law and promise are antithetical like faith and works

Galatians 3:18

For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

- > The promise is what God said He will do, not what depends on our prior works of law keeping
- > "granted" is *charizomai* which means favored or "graced"

6

Implications and Applications

- > Those who have faith and have received the Spirit are 'brothers' despite serious problems
- > God's promise is a legitimate and necessary object of faith
- > We must trust God as the only Promise Keeper and not ourselves

7

No Pietism!

Romans 8:7 - 9 (NASB)

because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for **it is not even able to do so**, and those who are in the flesh **cannot please God**. However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, **if indeed the Spirit of God dwells** in you. But **if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ**, he does not belong to Him.

8

We must believe the promises of God

Acts 13:32, 33 (NASB)

And we preach to you **the good news of the promise** made to the fathers that God has fulfilled **this promise** to our children in that He raised up Jesus, as it is also written in the second Psalm, 'You are My Son; today I have begotten You.'

- > The promise of God is to be believed
- > See Acts 2:39 for the universal call and the promise

9

The promises of God are for all who believe regardless of ethnicity

Revelation 5:9 (NASB)

And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation."

10

God has promised and God cannot lie

Hebrews 10:23 (NASB)

Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful

Hebrews 11:11 (NASB)

By faith even Sarah herself received ability to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, since she considered Him faithful who had promised.

11

God is the Promise Keeper, not us

Jeremiah 17:5, 7 (NASB)

Thus says the Lord, 'Cursed is the man who trusts in mankind And makes flesh his strength, And whose heart turns away from the Lord.' . . . 'Blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord And whose trust is the Lord.'

12
