

New Morning Magical – for 7-24-20

Do Faith and Law Go Together?

If you've been following along since we began these new MM's, you'll remember that the ecclesias in Galatia had been visited by one or more believing Jews who had attempted to "Judaize" them, meaning they had required the new Gentile believers in Christ to still follow the law of Moses.

We went through this on July 13 and you can refer to your notes for that day to refresh your memory. We're going to move into what Paul says about faith versus law and it's so important to remember that Paul had been a Pharisee; he studied under Gamaliel in Jerusalem, one of, if not THE premier teacher of the law in Israel. Paul knows the law backwards and forwards, is the point, but listen to his tone now as he lambastes the Galatians for even considering living under the Law having so recently been won to Christ.

Let's start today in Galatians 2, at the end of the story he's telling about Peter's hypocrisy when he visited Paul in Antioch, which was in northern Syria:

11 Now when Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, for he was self-censured.

12 For, before the coming of some from James, he ate together with those of the nations. Yet when they came (the guys sent from James in Jerusalem), he (Peter) shrank back, and severed himself, fearing those of the Circumcision.

13 And the rest of the Jews also play the hypocrite with him, so that Barnabas also was led away with their hypocrisy.

Paul is about to let Peter have it, because he was trying to play both sides of the fence, eating with Gentiles until Hebrew believers came who would no doubt report back to James all that they saw and heard. Paul, however, would have none of it.

14 But when I perceived that they are not correct in their attitude toward the truth of the evangel, I said to Cephas in front of all, "If you, being inherently a Jew, are living as the nations, and not as the Jews, how are you compelling the nations to be judaizing?"

In other words, *"How can you eat with the Gentiles one moment and treat them as unclean the next, wanting them to keep the Law when the boys from Jerusalem show up, when you acted like a happy Gentile before then?"*

Then Paul really launched:

15 We, who by nature are Jews, and not sinners of the nations,
16 having perceived that **a man is not being justified by works of law, except alone through the faith of Christ Jesus,**

In other words, *“You and I both know, Peter, that the Law never justified us, it never wiped away our sin and guilt; the Law just made it more obvious.”* This is a monumental admission for two Jews to let slip. Except Paul isn’t letting anything slip; he’s introducing a fundamental principle of faith for the first time: Justification by faith. We’ll have more to say about this later, but let’s get back to the scene between Paul and Peter in verse 16:

we also believe in Christ Jesus that we may be **justified by the faith of Christ and not by works of law, seeing that by works of law shall no flesh at all be justified.**

You and I aren’t justified by our own faith, but by Yeshua’s! When we are In Him by virtue of our faith, His faith and His righteousness is accounted to us. Our sins are pardoned, and the Father declares us “not guilty.” Justification means complete acquittal on all charges. The Father stopped reckoning our offenses when Yeshua spilled his blood like a sacrificial lamb; and now we learn that we are not only pardoned of all offenses, our records have been wiped clean! This is a huge revelation, and none of it can be won by being a good person or doing wonderful deeds for others, or going to church and tithing faithfully, or volunteering at a soup kitchen, or supporting a missionary in some far off country! You CAN’T EARN justification any more than you can EARN salvation! And Paul is making the same point to Peter, less my expansions on his words.

Before we move on to verse 20, let me point you to the study we made on Justification in *“Light Up the Scriptures.”* You’ll find it in the category, *“About Us,”* and it’s #41, titled, ***“More than Forgiven, Justified.”***

20 With Christ have I been crucified, yet I am living; no longer I, but living in me is Christ. Now that which I am now living in flesh, I am living in faith that is of the Son of God Who loves me, and gives Himself up for me.

21 I am not repudiating the grace of God, for if righteousness is through law, consequently Christ died gratuitously.

Listen to this: You and I were crucified with Christ! It’s His life inside us that we live today. This is a realization that should become a constant awareness permeating all through us!

Then Paul says, “*If righteousness is through law, then Christ died for nothing.*” It cannot be that Christ died for nothing! This business of faith vs. law is a bigger deal than I can make of it here. If observing the Law of Moses had ever been enough, Yeshua never needed to come, let alone die! You and I cannot do enough good to buy favor with God; Yeshua already did it, and He did it with such finality, that we have been fully pardoned and declared, “Not Guilty” by the Father. Man, this is big!

So, the Galatians knew all this already from Paul, and others came along, Jews who were no doubt jealous over the freedom that the Gentiles in Galatia were enjoying, and stupidly tried to enslave them into the Law. Apparently the Galatians were buying into following the Law, because Paul lets them have it next.

Chapter 3

1 O foolish Galatians! Who bewitches you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was graphically crucified?

2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you get the spirit by works of law or by hearing of faith?

Go to verse 5 now:

5 He, then, who is supplying you with the spirit, and operating works of power among you—did you get the spirit by works of law or by the hearing of faith,

6 according as Abraham believes God, and it is reckoned to him for righteousness?

Look at verse 6: Abraham didn't HAVE the Law; he trusted God, and *because* he trusted God, he was considered righteous. And in verse 2: Were you filled with the Holy Spirit because you adhered to the Law, or simply by believing? It's such an important question, Paul asks it again in verse 5, now reminding them of Who supplied the Spirit and operated works of power among them. All this is to convict the hell out of the Galatians who decided that the Law was a better deal than faith – simple, yet profound trust in the salvation that Yeshua won for them, which could not have been won by works of *any* law!

Now Paul is about to cut to the quick of any believing Jew who thinks continuing to adhere to the Law will help them at all.

7 Know, consequently, that **those of faith, these are sons of Abraham.**

Read the last part of that statement again!

This is unheard of! The Jews throughout this eon considered themselves Abraham's offspring. They still do, and they're right, according to the flesh; but now Paul says, "It's not your genealogy that counts; it's your faith. In Whom do you trust, Moses or Yeshua? Let's keep reading . . .

8 Now the scripture, perceiving before that God is justifying the nations by faith, brings before an evangel to Abraham, that In you shall all the nations be blessed.

Paul is quoting the Father's promise to Abraham in the Old Testament!

9 So that those of faith are being blessed together with believing Abraham.

Again, this is unprecedented. No other Apostle ever *thought* this, much less said it!

10 For whoever are of works of law are under a curse, for it is written that, Accursed is everyone who is not remaining in all things written in the scroll of the law to do them.

Mess up any one piece of the Law and you're screwed. Being under the Law, Paul says here, is living under a curse. Paul is determined to shame the Galatians into unloading this foul and wholly unnecessary burden of the Law off their shoulders and return to GRACE!

11 Now that in law no one is being justified with God is evident, for the just one by faith shall be living.

Paul is again quoting from the Old Testament in Habakkuk 2. These are such beautiful words, could we stand under their shower a moment this morning? Beginning now in verse 1:

I am standing on my guard,
And I am stationing myself on the siege work;
I am watching to see what He shall speak to me [it's actually *IN* me!],
And what I shall reply concerning His correcting of me.

2 Then Yahweh is answering me and saying,
Write the vision, and make it plain on tablets,
That he may run who is reading it.

3 For the vision is yet for an appointed time;
And it shall bud at the end, and it shall not prove a lie;
If it be dallying, tarry for it,
For it shall come, yea come, and it shall not be late.

4 Behold, it is made presumptuous: his soul is not upright in him.
Yet the just one by his faith shall live.

So beautiful and so important to remember. Paul has much more to say to these Galatians in verse 12:

12 Now the law is not of faith, but who does them "shall be living in them."

13 Christ reclaims us from the curse of the law, becoming a curse for our sakes, for it is written, Accursed is everyone hanging on a pole,

14 that the blessing of Abraham may be coming INTO the nations in Christ Jesus, that we may be obtaining the promise of the spirit through THE faith.

We are among the Nations. We are Gentiles – forgive the assumption here – and Abraham’s blessing has come INTO us INSIDE Christ Jesus, so that we obtain the promise of the spirit through THE faith. THE faith is Christ’s. He established a whole new level of trusting the Father, which is what faith is. His was a unique faith at a unique time for a unique purpose, never to be repeated. His is THE faith, and it is through THAT faith – His Faith – that the blessing of Abraham comes into us who are IN Christ. It’s all because of Christ that you and I are even meeting today. His is THE faith in which we live today if we are HIS.

Let’s go now to verse 16:

16 Now to Abraham the promises were declared, and to his Seed. He is not saying "And to seeds," as of many, but as of One: And to "your Seed," which is Christ.

Now jump down to verse 19:

19 What, then, is the law? On behalf of transgressions was it added, until the Seed should come to Whom He has promised, being prescribed through messengers in the hand of a mediator.

20 Now there is no Mediator of one. Yet God is One.

21 Is the law, then, against the promises of God? May it not be coming to that! For if a law were given that is able to vivify [that is, make alive], really, righteousness were [or would be] out of law.

22 But the scripture locks up all together under sin, that the promise out of Jesus Christ's faith may be given to those who are believing.

We're looking straight into the sovereignty of God: THE all was locked up under sin – nothing escaped being locked up under sin. No one was exempt, and there was never anything you or I could have done about it. This was the Father's design, and why? So "that the promise out of **Jesus Christ's faith** may be given to those who are believing." It was Yeshua's trusting God through His horrible death bearing the sins of the entire world from Adam on, that won His promise for us who are believing. Yeshua fulfilled the Law, so why would we at any time, try to keep it, and thereby deny His achievement on the cross?

You can see how exercised Paul was and how horrified he was that anyone would trade what Yeshua won for what the Law could never accomplish. Never, ever mistake doing good for being In Christ. Never trust in anyone or anything but the Father and the Son, and listen only to the Holy Spirit, which will guide you into all the truth.

23 Now before the coming of faith we were garrisoned – **we were walled up** – under law, being locked up together for the faith about to be revealed.

24 So that the law has become our escort to Christ, that we may be justified by faith.

25 Now, at the coming of faith, we are no longer under an escort – **we don't need this anymore** –

26 for you are all sons of God, through faith in Christ Jesus.

Here is yet another unprecedented statement: "*You are all sons – and daughters – of God, through faith in Christ Jesus.*"

27 For whoever are baptized into Christ, put on Christ,

28 in Whom there is no Jew nor yet Greek, there is no slave nor yet free, there is no male and female, for you all are one in Christ Jesus.

29 Now if you are Christ's, consequently you are of Abraham's seed, enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise.

Paul puts a cherry on top in verse 29: "If you are Christ's, you are of Abraham's seed, enjoyers of the allotment according to the promise."

Finally, today, Chapter 4, verses 6 and 7:

6 Now, seeing that you are sons – *and daughters* – God delegates the spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying "Abba! Father!"

7 So that you are no longer a slave – *or servant* – but a son. Now if a son, an enjoyer also of an allotment – *an inheritance* – from God, through Christ.

I'll leave you here to contemplate what this inheritance is. For now, though, look at what we discovered today:

- We live by faith, not by Law, and that faith is Yeshua's which is imparted into us.
- We are justified, declared not guilty, and acquitted of all charges, through Yeshua's faith.
- Just as Abraham was deemed righteous because He trusted the Father, so are we who believe in Yeshua.
- We have been given, *"the promise out of Jesus Christ's faith."* The promise is, *"I will not leave you dead; I will raise you out from among the dead."*
- You are God's son or daughter, through your faith in the One Who died that you may live, and an inheritance awaits you upon His return, which I believe is the change from mortality to immortality.

It sure seems worth it to trust the Father and believe in the Son, doesn't it?

Then, until next time:

May Yahweh bless you and keep you;
May Yahweh light up His face toward you
and be gracious to you;
May Yahweh lift His face to you
and appoint peace for you.