

How to Become a Child of God

Galatians: 3:6-14, 24-26

April 4th, 2009

Intro

Today I'm going to give you the Bible's most important message of all.

I could teach on many areas of life from the bible. Teachings that could help us all at work, as parents, in our marriage etc. And all these things could be helpful to us even this next and perhaps for the rest of our lives on earth. The bible just has a lot of good stuff for us. But there is nothing I could teach you that is more important to you for this life and for all eternity than what I'm going to teach on today.

How to become a child of God and How not to become a child of God.

This is the most important message of the bible.

For those of you who have a bible with you Turn to Galatians 3:6

Intro Galatians: We're in a study of the book of Galatians right now. It's a book in the bible where Christians are being reminded about how they became a child of God and how many people attempt to become a child of God but in the wrong way.

The passage I will preach from today tells about two approaches to becoming a child of God. One will work and the other won't. One is easy and the other is impossible. One is blessed and the other cursed.

Scripture Reading: Galatians 3:6-14, 24-26

Galatians 3:6-14 Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. ⁷Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. ⁸And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "All the nations shall be blessed in you." For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone

who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them." ¹¹Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith."

¹²However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them." Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"-- ¹⁴in 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 3:24-26 (NASB)

Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. ²⁶For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Prayer:

How to become a child of God (Part A) - Faith

Galatians 3:6-9 Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness. ⁷Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. ⁸And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, "All the nations shall be blessed in you."

Background on Abraham, the Jews, and Gentiles

- Father of the Jews/God's people/God's family
- Gentiles were non-jews, no biological connection to Abraham
- Son of Abraham and child of God are synonymous
- God's promises to Abraham extend to all his children
- To become a son of Abraham is a big deal

Good news:

- Right standing with God is something granted/reckoned to "those who are of faith"
- "Those who are of Faith" are "Sons of Abraham" not those who merely have a biological connection.
- This makes being a child of God possible to Gentiles.
This is good news because faith is much easier than the alternative – Works

These verses by the way tells us that Right standing with God and becoming a child of God is not genetic. Just because one of your parents was a child of God doesn't mean you are or will be.

Not all jews were approaching God by faith. But 'those who were of faith' were his children whether Jews or Gentiles.

How not to become a child of God - Works

Now for all of you who are with us each week in our study of the book of Galatians this message answers from scripture “Why works don’t work”

And the first reason was that all the way back to Abraham righteousness or right standing was by means of faith. But there’s more:

Gal 3:10-12 *For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them." ¹¹Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "The righteous man shall live by faith." ¹²However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, "He who practices them shall live by them."*

Here we learn how not to approach becoming a child of God.

- 1) Not by Genetics – Don’t rely upon your parents faith
- 2) Not by “works of the law”

The Jew was commanded to obey all the law and commandments as a part of being in covenant with God. And Moses said “Cursed is everyone who doesn’t obey it all. Guess how many that was?

It was everyone. So then, anyone who was trying to be reckoned a child of God by their own performance was doomed to fail from the outset.

Now that may sound like not such good news but it is. Do you know how many people are trying so hard to be righteous and good enough to be God’s children. Some of them foolishly think they are. Others feel like they never measure up and so they give up. But neither have peace because they believe it is all riding on them.

The good news here is that becoming a child of God doesn’t depend upon your performance for, “The righteous life by faith.”

Now we can’t stop there because so far it is unclear who or what our faith must be in. Or does that even matter.

Much of the religious world will tell you these days that having a faith is what counts but it doesn't matter who or what that faith is in.

How to become a child of God (Part B) _____ in _____

Galatians 3:13-14 *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us-- for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"-- ¹⁴in 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.*

So because no one could fulfill all the law everyone was cursed.

OT Background: In the law of Moses whenever someone was guilty of a crime that carried capital punishment after they were executed they were hung on a tree until evening as a visible deterrent to others.

Two things you need to know about Jesus:

- 1) He came to fulfill the law and succeeded (sinless)
- 2) He came to absorb our curse for us (crucifixion)

Look at this cross. This of course is symbolic but of what? The only person in the history of mankind to perfectly fulfill God's commands in spirit and in deed hung on a tree.

So he didn't hang there because he had it coming. He hung there in your's and my place.

This is what it means that he came and redeemed us from the curse of the law...

... "in order that in Christ Jesus the blessings of Abraham might come to non-jews (such as us) so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit by faith.

"the promise of the Spirit" we learned last week is the proof of our being right with God or rather our being a child of God.

So we skip down to vs. 24-26 and we see it said more plainly –

Galatians 3:24-26 (NASB)

Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. ²⁵But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. ²⁶For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.