

5. Children of Abraham

Galatians 3:15-29

1. Isn't circumcision the most important covenant marker, the sign of God's favour? Answer : No, that is faith.

2. Abraham had faith, but was still required to circumcise his offspring. So doesn't that mean that circumcision and the other rituals of the law still matter?

Answer: No, that is to misunderstand the law. (3:15-29)

3. So the law has no relevance to Christians then? We can just do what we like?

Answer: The law guarantees our freedom (ch 4.)

Faith *alone*?

“As for me, this is my covenant with you: You will be the father of many nations. ... Every male among you shall be circumcised. You are to undergo circumcision, and it will be the sign of the covenant between me and you. For the generations to come every male among you who is eight days old must be circumcised, including those born in your household or bought with money from a foreigner—those who are not your offspring. Whether born in your household or bought with your money, they must be circumcised. My covenant in your flesh is to be an everlasting covenant. Any uncircumcised male, who has not been circumcised in the flesh, will be cut off from his people; he has broken my covenant.” (NIV Gen 17:4, 10–14)

The covenant must be fulfilled (Gal.3:15). An amendment cannot override the original intention (v17).

The rule of *one*

There is *one* seed Jesus (v16)

Law and promise cannot be in opposition (17,18)
(and law has a mediator—who?) (19, 20a)

God is *one*! (20b)

Law and promise agree on faith (21-23)
(and promise has a mediator—Jesus) (v22)

There is *one* seed (26-29)

Jew or Gentile, male or female, slave or free (v28)

Genesis 17:15,16,20

The *one* seed (v16, vv26-29)

Circumcision must be fulfilled for *all* Abraham's children

There is one law and Jesus has fulfilled it
(Luke 2:21,22)

So for *all* included in Christ, irrespective of race, sex or legal liberty, the law has been fulfilled (v28).

In baptism, *by faith*, we are 'clothed in Christ' (v27)

Law and promise agree (v17-20a, v21)

Law does not overrule promise (v17, v21)

The true mediator is Jesus (v22)

The pointers to the promised seed are no longer relevant (v24), because they are fulfilled in Jesus

The whole world (vv21,22) is condemned by the law

All in Christ are declared righteous by faith (v8, v26)

All such are free, adult, inheriting sons (v24)

A supervisor is no longer required (v25)

God is one (v20b, Deuteronomy 6:4)

The Father is the giver of law and promise

The beneficiary and mediator are both the Son

The Spirit executes the covenant (v3, v14)

God is one!

Clothed in Christ

He has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires. (NIV 2 Peter 1:4)

Live as responsible adults and heirs
not needing the rules of the nursery (Chapter 4)

Christ is all in all!