





# Galatians

TO THE  
CHURCHES  
IN GALATIA

WEEK THIRTEEN

## BABYSITTERS, MATURITY, BAPTISM, AND FAMILY GALATIANS 3:23-29

The Jewish people held Moses as the greatest messenger of God's will and blessing because he brought the Law to the people. Paul will say something both amazing and offensive at the same time:

- **Moses was a mediator**
- **Moses was a terrible mediator**

When Moses showed up (as a mediator), he made things worse, because the Law only revealed the depth of our sin; the Law was powerless to actually save us.

### How was Moses a mediator?

- **In what ways have you mediated for others?**
- **Why was Moses a terrible mediator?**
- **How do you describe what the Law is, and was, for?**

**Babysitter:** *Galatians 3:23-24* Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. So then, the law was our guardian until Christ came, in order that we might be justified by faith. A guardian was either a slave or a household servant whose job was to look after the children on the parents' behalf (much like a babysitter). The realization of the Law's purpose is meant to lead us to Jesus, who **fulfilled the Law**, and taught us to trust in God's mercy and grace found in the Gospel.

- **How was the Law a babysitter for Israel?**
- **In what ways have laws or rules pointed you, personally, to Jesus?**
- **How can we better understand our need for a Savior by understanding the Law?**
- **How have you grown in maturity, no longer relying on the guidance of the Law?**

**Maturity:** Between the time of Moses (the Law) and the coming of the Messiah, Israel was still a child and needed special looking after. That did not mean, however, that the babysitter should continue to do the job once Israel had grown up (after Jesus fulfilled the Law). Paul argues that with the coming of the

Messiah, Israel has, at last, reached maturity as God's children--this includes us! The sign of maturity is **FAITH IN JESUS, NOT IN OUR WORKS!** The faith of a believer is the sign that a person is a full and complete member of God's family.

### Read Galatians 3:23-29.

- **Are there ways you resist growing in maturity (by relying on the Law)? Why?**
- **Where in your life do you choose slavery over freedom in Christ?**
- **In what areas of your faith would you like to see growth/maturity?**

**Baptism:** Faith is what unites us to Christ and all of His saving benefits. We are placed into God's family through the Holy Spirit baptizing us and placing us into God's family (*1 Corinthians 12:13*). Paul says that we *all* have been baptized by the Spirit; all believers have received this baptism as a result of salvation. In speaking about baptism, Paul is referring to the work of the Spirit, not our act of baptism, but our act reflects what God has done. For the earliest Christians, repentance, faith, conversion, and baptism were often experienced as a *single event*. Baptism was the principal way in which people *professed* their faith in Christ.

### How have we been baptized into God's family?

- **Why is the practice of baptism important?**
- **Could you explain how and why Element does baptisms?**
- **Does anybody want to get baptized?**

**Family:** God promised Abraham a single family in Genesis 12. Now (in Christ), as a result of the Gospel, God has created that one family. This is why Paul speaks about being saved by grace through faith; it is like he is telling the Galatians, "*You have become part of God's promised family by faith and not by works.*"

**At the moment of faith: through faith, we belong to Christ, are baptized into Christ's family, surrender and submit to Jesus, and become heirs of the promise.**

We give up our own rights and are instead given the right to become children of God. We lay down all that we have and receive all we could ever want.

- **What does it mean to be in the "family of God" and "coheirs of the Kingdom"?**
- **How does the Gospel bring unity among the family of God?**

There is nothing more relevant or more practical than our new identity "in Christ." Do we really believe and trust in Jesus, or do we secretly prefer to be looked after by a babysitter?

