

- I. The law as a custodian for the Jews, the Gentiles also under a custodian
 - a. The law was never intended to bring life, and is therefore not against the promises.
 - i. Had a law been given which could bring life, this would indeed have invalidated the covenant and made the promise void.
 - b. Rather, the law plays a role in bringing the promise to fulfillment by imprisoning all under sin.
 - i. The knowledge of sin
 - ii. The reality of death and judgment
 - iii. The weakness and powerlessness of the flesh
 - c. For Jews, the law functioned as a custodian
 - i. A custodian [gr. παιδαγωγός] is a child guardian, usually a slave himself, whose charge is to keep the kid out of trouble and make sure he gets to school. He is not a “tutor” but a “babysitter” who guides and cares for the child.
 - ii. It’s important to emphasize that Paul does not view the law as a general stepping stone to the Messiah, as the one leading us to Christ. Paul never seeks to bring his audience under the law so that he can bring them to Christ.
 - d. Both Jew and Gentile imprisoned under the elements of the world.
 - i. In 4:8-11 Paul draws the parallel between the law and the Gentile’s own enslavement to the elements of the world. They are both part of the old creation order, and both are set aside in the Messiah.
- II. Christ as the mature heir
 - a. The Messiah, sent forth by God at the fulness of time, entered the world under the same enslaving elements, but by his faithful death under law and resurrection by the Spirit, he has entered into the promised inheritance
 - b. Christ is the mature son, no longer in need of a custodian.
- III. The privileged result of being in him, the foolishness of returning to slavery
 - a. In him, we also are now mature sons of God and are no longer under a custodian.
 - b. We have been baptized into Christ, and therefore what is true of him is true of us.
 - i. The significance of baptism here – not as magic power, nor as merely a symbol, but more as an effecting ceremony. The baptism is what signifies the Galatians’ union with Christ. Not unlike a marriage ceremony, where the bride and groom exchange vows and rings, thus establishing their legal bond.
 - c. We are now heirs with Christ of the new creation.
 - i. The Orthodox Jewish Synagogue prayer includes a section that reads: “Blessed be He that He did not make me a Gentile; blessed be He that He did not make me a slave; blessed be He that he did not make me a woman.” Race, society, and gender are all relativized before God in the Messiah.