

Galatians 3:15-26

What's the Point?

Scripture: Galatians 3:15-26

Memory Verse: Galatians 3:24 *"Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith."*

Lesson Focus: Paul has been stressing faith over works of the law from the beginning. Some might then wonder what the point of the law is, and in this passage Paul gives an answer that again emphasizes the supremacy of faith!

Activities and Crafts: Word Search and Bring It Home Discussion Qs for 3rd - 5th.
Craft for 1st/2nd Grade: Arrow

Starter Activity: "What's the Point" Charades

These kids should be old enough now to understand the reason or "point" behind many of the things they do. Sometimes they might even question why they should do them by asking "*what's the point?*"

Consider getting the lesson started with a game of charades. We will provide you with a collection of everyday activities that the kids should be familiar with. * Invite a volunteer up to blindly pick one of them and act it out silently so that the class can guess what it is. Whoever gets it right can then come up and choose another one. But before you move onto the next one ask everyone the question, "*What's the point of this activity?*" Have some discussion over each one!

Some examples of activities would be brushing your teeth, taking out the trash, mowing the lawn, playing football, exercising, playing an instrument *, picking up doggie-doo-doo, going to school. Each of these activities has a "point" or a good reason for doing it, even if it is something no one really wants to do.

Finally, transition into the lesson by reminding kids about how in the book of Galatians Paul has been very careful to point out how our salvation comes through faith in Jesus's finished work on the cross and not by our good works. * (**Teachers:** Consider reviewing last week's lesson on cause and effect!) This is the true gospel, and it is such good news! But then people might ask: *What's the point* of doing good? Or *what's the point* of God's law if it doesn't factor into our salvation? Our text today will answer that question. Let's take a look!

Bible Study:

Review Galatians 3:13-14 to remind kids that God's plan and promise was always that through faith in Jesus, people would be redeemed, saved, Spirit-filled, etc. Even Abraham (not Abraham Lincoln!), the ancient founder of the Jewish nation, received God's blessing through faith.

Galatians 3:15-16: Paul continues to talk about the promises that were made to Abraham. Not only did God promise to Abraham that his descendants or "seed" would be a mighty nation (the Jewish nation), but that one of his descendants would bring blessing and salvation to the whole world. That, of course, was Jesus.

Take a quick look at **Matthew 1:1-16** which shows Jesus's family tree. Point out how the genealogy begins with Abraham and it ends with Jesus showing how God kept His promise to bring the Savior of the world from Abraham's line! (**Teachers:** Consider drawing a "trimmed" family tree on the white board showing how Jesus connects all the way back to Abraham)

Galatians 3:17: Now God's law was given over 400 years after the promises were made to Abraham. The most famous part of God's law are the 10 commandments.
Q: Who knows what some of these are?

The bad guys were teaching that this law changed the game. No longer was God's blessing and salvation merely received by faith as was the case with Abraham, but we must obey the law to earn God's blessing. But Paul says, "ABSOLUTELY NOT!"

Galatians 3:18: If that was the case, God would be breaking His promise! God is a promise-keeper not a promise-breaker!

To understand God's promise better, imagine these two scenarios.

- 1) You learn you have a great Aunt Jenny that wants to give you a million bucks. You would just need to meet her and freely receive what she wants to give or you can ignore her (or laugh at her) and reject it. But you only need to believe in her promise and receive what she wants to give you. *
- 2) You learn you have a great Aunt Jenny that wants to give you a million bucks, but requires that you write a letter to her every day. If you forget one day, you lose the million bucks! While this is still generous, it's not merely a promise you believe and receive. This is a "law" you must obey perfectly.

Paul says the true gospel is like the first scenario. We receive God's blessing on the basis of His promise, not on our performance or ability to keep the law! But then we might still ask the question, "**What's the point** of the law?"

Galatians 3:19-20: God gave the law not to show people how to be saved, but to show us how desperately we need to be saved, because of our sin! Let's go back to those 10 commandments:

Q: Have you ever stolen? Ever lied? Ever dishonored your parents?

A: Then you are guilty and deserving of eternal punishment. The law shows us just how bad you really are! This is BAD NEWS! *

Galatians 3:21-22: Believe it or not, this is exactly why God gave us the BAD news of the law: We would be made so uncomfortable by our sin that we would be so *eager and grateful to freely receive the GOOD news of salvation by faith in Jesus!

Galatians 3:23-24: So, what was the point of the law? The point of the law was to "point" us to our need for Jesus Christ! *

Teachers: These verses and the last one talk about how we are "justified" by faith which is the heart of the gospel. This might be hard for the kids to understand so consider using this illustration below geared toward each age group to help them better understand. Afterwards, wrap up the lesson with the last couple of verses.

1st-2nd grade: We will provide you with some sticky notes for writing on.

1) Ask the kids to think of some basic sins or bad things that we all have done and write or draw them on the sticky notes. Then stick them to yourself (or consider having the kids stick them onto themselves too) to illustrate that we all have broken God's law. Point out how God's law was given to show us all that we have this problem of sin and that God must and will punish sin (BAD NEWS)!

2) Write "Jesus" on the whiteboard and have the kids list some of the good things that Jesus did during His life (i.e. help, serve, heal, love people). Write or draw each of these on sticky notes also and then put them on the "Jesus board".

Emphasize that Jesus kept the whole law and lived the perfect life!

- 3) Now explain that when Jesus died on the cross, an amazing trade took place:
- a. First, Jesus took our sins upon Himself and paid for them all! (Put our "sin stickers" now on the Jesus board). When He died on the cross, He took OUR sin and guilt! Remember, He did not have any sin Himself! This is WHY our sins are forgiven when we believe, because Jesus paid for them!
 - b. Second, Jesus gives His perfect righteousness to us! (Take Jesus's "righteous stickers" off of His board and put them on yourself or kids). His perfect life of righteousness becomes OUR righteousness! He "swaps" with us. He takes our sin and gives us His righteousness!

That's an amazing promise that God has made! But remember not everyone gets the "Jesus stickers". Rather, only those who trust and believe in Jesus through faith! Salvation, again, is not based on our performance, but on God's promise!

3rd-5th grade: We will pull out some "report cards" as described below. * See the blank sample on the last page of the lesson.

1) The first envelope labeled "Me" contains "our" report card. Pull out the blank one first and explain that instead of schoolwork, we get graded according to how we obey God's law: Obeying your parents, telling the truth, etc. Ask the kids what grades they think they should get for each "subject". Some may think Bs or Cs thinking they are OK, but that they can do better.

2) Then explain that God actually gives us all the same grade and pull out the actual report card which will have "Fs" for each one! Let that sink in. * This is what God's law reveals to us! (see **Galatians 3:22**) Ask the kids what would happen if they brought a report card like this home from school: PUNISHMENT!

3) Now shift the focus to Jesus. First, point out that when Jesus died on the cross, He took the punishment we deserve (for our Fs) upon Himself. It's like He erases our Fs. Refer back to the blank report card. But is this all He does? If He earns us only a blank report card, we are still burdened to try and earn perfect grades and we already know that we can't. Toss that blank one away! *

4) The other thing Jesus did was live a perfect life. To illustrate this, now pull out the second envelope which contains Jesus's report card. Pull it out and show the A+ in every subject. But then to illustrate what actually happened on the cross put Jesus's report card into the envelope marked "Me" and put your "Fs" report card into Jesus's envelope! Let that sink in and ask the kids how they would feel going home with a straight A+ report card! Also point out how great a price Jesus paid to take all of those "Fs"! Jesus offers us His perfect report card and He takes our awful one Himself! It is the most outrageous and gracious trade ever offered and it was all part of God's plan and promise that we receive by faith!

But not everyone gets the A+ report card! Rather, only those who trust and believe in Jesus through faith! Salvation, or justification, is not based on our performance, but on God's promise!

Galatians 3:25: In school, kids have tutors to help them along only for a season to get them on the right track. In the same way, once the law effectively points us to faith in Jesus *, we don't need it as a tutor anymore! Why not?

Galatians 3:26: Because believers have become God's kids through faith in Jesus! We become part of His family forever which is what God has desired all along! *

Key Point: So what is the point of the law? To "point" us to Jesus, that by faith we might not only be saved, but also become children of God forever!

Q: Are you still under this tutor? If so, see that the tutor is only there to point out how desperately you need Jesus and put your trust in Him completely today! For salvation is not based on our performance, but by trusting in His promise alone!

Sample Report Card

Subject

Grade

Sharing

Obeying Parents

Telling the Truth

Speaking Kind Words

Letting Others Go First

Loving Your Enemies

Bring It Home

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are faithful in Christ Jesus:

*Greetings! Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

First

Read Romans 3:9-10. If God was to give you a report card for keeping His law, what grade do you think would get?

Second

Read Galatians 3:24. How does God's law (i.e. the 10 commandments) point us to our need for Jesus Christ?

Parent Challenge

What does it mean "that we might be justified by faith"?
(Galatians 3:24b)

By His Grace,

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