

**Notes on the Greek New Testament**  
**Day 260 – September 17<sup>th</sup> – Galatians 3:21-4:7**

**Works frequently referenced in these notes on Galatians**

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Machen, J Gresham	<i>Notes on Galatians</i> , Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., Philadelphia, 1973
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**Verse 21**

Ὁ οὖν νόμος κατὰ τῶν ἐπαγγελιῶν τοῦ θεοῦ;  
μη γένοιτο· εἰ γὰρ ἐδόθη νόμος ὁ δυνάμενος  
ζωοποιῆσαι, ὄντως ἐκ νόμου ἂν ἦν ἡ  
δικαιοσύνη.

κατα prep with i) acc according to; ii) gen  
against, throughout

ἐπαγγελία, ας f promise, what is promised

του θεου is omitted by p<sup>46</sup> B and a few  
versions.

γένοιτο Verb, aor opt, 3s γινομαι

μη γένοιτο 'by no means,' 'certainly not'

ἐδόθη Verb, aor pass indic, 3 s δίδωμι give  
ζωοποιεω give life, make alive  
ὄντως really, certainly, indeed  
ἂν particle indicating contingency  
δικαιοσύνη, ης f righteousness, what is  
right, what God requires, justice

No law has power to give spiritual life "and so  
righteousness in whatever dimension, whether  
forensic or ethical, cannot be based on any  
law." Longenecker

**Verse 22**

ἀλλὰ συνέκλεισεν ἡ γραφή τὰ πάντα ὑπὸ  
ἁμαρτίαν ἵνα ἡ ἐπαγγελία ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ  
Χριστοῦ δοθῇ τοῖς πιστεύουσιν.

συνέκλεισεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s  
συγκλειω make/ keep (someone) a  
prisoner

"Paul's normal use of the singular γραφή ... and  
the presence of the article ἡ ... suggest that he  
had a particular passage in mind, probably the  
immediate antecedent of 3:10, i.e. Deut 27:26."  
Longenecker

"The neuter τα πάντα (lit: 'all things') used of  
people has the effect of obliterating every  
distinction and referring to all humanity as an  
entity (so 'all people' or perhaps better  
'everyone without distinction'; cf. Eph 1:10;  
Col 1:20). Longenecker

ἁμαρτία, ας f sin

"Paul saw the law functioning in a negative  
fashion vis-à-vis God's promise: it brought  
about a knowledge of sin, perhaps even an  
intensified knowledge by actually increasing  
sin, and it brought condemnation by bringing  
all humanity under its curse. In effect, it was,  
as Lutheran theologians often call it, 'God's  
strange work' instituted in order to bring us to  
'God's proper work.' It was not opposed to  
God's promises, for it operated in the economy  
of God on a different level or plane than did  
God's promises." Longenecker

ἐπαγγελία, ας f promise, what is promised

On the expression ἐκ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ  
(‘based on the faithfulness of Christ’  
Longenecker) cf. the comments on 2:16.

δοθῇ Verb, aor pass subj, 3s δίδωμι give

"Paul saw two strands of God-given material  
running throughout the Scriptures: (1) the law  
of God, which was given to highlight the true  
nature of sin and so bring sinful humanity  
under its curse; and (2) the promises of God,  
which have always called for a response of  
faith and are now focused in the faithfulness or  
obedience of Jesus Christ. In terms of how  
these two strands operate in our standing  
before God: the one brings us down; the other  
raises us up. Ultimately, the strands are united  
in a common, overall purpose." Longenecker

**Verse 23**

Πρὸ τοῦ δὲ ἔλθειν τὴν πίστιν ὑπὸ νόμον  
ἐφρουρούμεθα συγκλειόμενοι εἰς τὴν  
μέλλουσαν πίστιν ἀποκαλυφθῆναι.

Verse 23 repeats the thought of v22 but the focus now shifts from 'everyone without distinction' to the Jews.

ἔλθειν Verb, aor act infin ἐρχομαι  
φρουρεῶ guard, hold prisoner

Explained more fully in v24.

συγκλειόμενοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl  
συγκλείω see v.22

μέλλουσαν Verb, pres act ptc, f acc s μέλλω

"Paul means not faith generically, but the particular faith referred to in v22b that has to do with 'the faithfulness of Jesus Christ' and humanity's response of faith." Longenecker

ἀποκαλυφθῆναι Verb, aor pass infin  
ἀποκαλύπτω reveal, disclose

**Verse 24**

ὥστε ὁ νόμος παιδαγωγὸς ἡμῶν γέγονεν εἰς  
Χριστόν, ἵνα ἐκ πίστεως δικαιοθῶμεν·

ὥστε so that, with the result that  
παιδαγωγός, ου m guardian, teacher

The term 'teacher' is misleading. "The παιδαγωγός, though usually a slave, was an important figure in ancient patrician households, being charged with the supervision and conduct of one or more sons in the family. He was distinguished from the διδασκαλός, for he gave no formal instruction but administered the directives of the father in a custodial manner, though, of course, indirectly he taught by the supervision he gave and the discipline he administered."

Longenecker

γέγονεν Verb, perf act indic, 3s γίνομαι

εἰς Χριστόν is either:

- i) 'to lead us to Christ' (NIV), perhaps as the παιδαγωγός took the child to the teacher; or,
- ii) 'until Christ came', parallel to the use of εἰς in v23b.

Longenecker argues that the second is required by the context since Paul is speaking of successive periods of salvation history.

δικαιοθῶμεν Verb, aor pass subj, 1pl  
δικαιοῶ

**Verse 25**

ἐλθούσης δὲ τῆς πίστεως οὐκέτι ὑπὸ  
παιδαγωγόν ἔσμεν.

ἐλθούσης Verb, aor act ptc, f gen s ἐρχομαι  
οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more

"Here Paul delivers the *coup de grace* to the Judaisers' argument for Gentile Christians to live a lifestyle governed by the Mosaic law. For with the coming of the Christian gospel (της πίστεως) as effected by Christ, the law no longer has validity as a παιδαγωγός regulating the life of faith. One may, of course, as a Jew continue to live a Jewish nomistic lifestyle for cultural, national or pragmatic reasons. To be a Jewish believer in Jesus did not mean turning one's back on one's own culture or nation. Yet no longer could it be argued that circumcision, Jewish dietary laws, following distinctly Jewish ethical precepts, or any other matter having to do with a Jewish lifestyle were requisite for the life of faith... The Christian church today has many who formally oppose legalism but hold firmly to nomism. There is a religion of piety that they believe to be God-honouring. What they fail to realise, however, is that in many ways they are recapitulating the error of the Judaisers." Longenecker.

**Verses 26-29**

Longenecker suggests that "The 'sayings' statement of v26 and the confessional portions of vv27-28 probably stem from the early church, being quoted here by Paul; the concluding statement of v29 is in Paul's own words in application of these early Christian affirmations to the question at hand."

**Verse 26**

πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν  
Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.

"In Christ Jesus' there is a new universality of oneness and a new relationship of being God's children." Longenecker

**Verse 27**

ὅσοι γὰρ εἰς Χριστόν ἐβαπτίσθητε, Χριστόν  
ἐνεδύσασθε·

For vv27-28 as part of a baptismal confession of the early church, cf. similar phrases in 1 Cor 12:13 and Col 3:11 (the latter passage though not explicitly mentioning baptism immediately follows verses on that subject).

ὅσος, η, ου correlative pronoun, as much as;  
pl. as many as, all

ἐβαπτίσθητε Verb, aor pass indic, 2 pl  
βαπτίζω baptise, wash

"The passive form of the verb ... suggests action done by another, certainly those baptising but more importantly God himself." Longenecker

ἐνεδύσασθε Verb, aor midd indic, 2 pl ἐνδύω  
dress, clothe; midd put on, wear

"The figurative use of ἐνδύω ('put on' or 'clothe') with a personal object means to take on the characteristics, virtues, and/or intentions of the one referred to, and so to become like that person... It may be as well that the metaphorical sense of clothing one's self with Christ was suggested to early Christians by baptismal candidates divesting themselves of clothing before baptism and then being reclothed afterwards." Longenecker

### Verse 28

οὐκ ἔνι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλληγ, οὐκ ἔνι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔνι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἰς ἔστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ.  
ἐνι there is (equivalent to ἐνεστιν)  
Ἰουδαῖος, α, ον a Jew, Jewish, Judean  
οὐδε neither, nor  
ἐλευθερος, α, ον free, free person  
ἄρσην, εν gen ενος male, man  
θῆλυ Adjective, n nom & acc s θηλυς, εια, υ female, woman

These three couplets may express a deliberate contrast with the 'blessings' that appear at the beginning of the Jewish cycle of morning prayers, thanking God he did not make me a Gentile, a slave or a woman. "Christians saw it as particularly appropriate to give praise in their baptismal confession that through Christ the old racial schisms and cultural divisions had been healed." Longenecker

### Verse 29

εἰ δὲ ὑμεῖς Χριστοῦ, ἄρα τοῦ Ἀβραάμ σπέρμα ἐστέ, κατ' ἐπαγγελίαν κληρονόμοι.  
κατα prep with i) acc according to  
ἐπαγγελια, ας f promise, what is promised  
κληρονομος, ου m heir, one who receives  
what is promised (by God)

### Galatians 4:1-7

"There is much that needs to be said regarding the form, provenance, meaning and use of many of the individual items within this passage. But whatever one may conclude with regard to its details, Paul's overall meaning in the illustration is clear: the guardianship of the Mosaic law was meant to be for a time when God's people were in their spiritual minority; but now with the coming of Christ, the time set by the Father has been fulfilled and Christians are to live freely as mature sons 'in Christ,' not under the law's supervision." Longenecker

### Verse 1

Λέγω δέ, ἐφ' ὅσον χρόνον ὁ κληρονόμος νήπιός ἐστιν, οὐδὲν διαφέρει δούλου κύριος πάντων ὧν,

λέγω δε 'what I am saying is this ...'  
introducing an illustrative analogy.

ὅσος, η, ον correlative pronoun, as much as,  
how much, how far

ἐφ ὅσον χρονον 'as long as'

νηπιος, α, ον baby, infant, child  
οὐδεις, οὐδεμια, οὐδεν no one, nothing  
διαφερω intrans. be worth more than, be superior to, differ from

"The picture he draws is of a boy in a home of wealth and standing who is legally an heir (ὁ κληρονομος) and so the 'young master' (κυριος, lit. 'lord' or 'owner') of the family estate, but who is still a minor (νηπιος) and so lives under rules very much like a slave (δουλος)." Longenecker

### Verse 2

ἀλλὰ ὑπὸ ἐπιτρόπους ἐστὶ καὶ οἰκονόμους ἄχρι τῆς προθεσμίας τοῦ πατρός.

ἐπιτροπος, ου m steward, guardian,  
foreman

A synonym for παιδαγωγος

οικονομος, ου m steward, manager

It is not clear why Paul adds this second term or what its particular intent. The two terms have prompted much discussion. Having outlined a variety of views, Longenecker says, "It is difficult to determine exactly what legal system Paul had in mind when he said, 'but he is under guardians and administrators until the time set by the father.' It is entirely possible, in fact, that Paul, being more interested in application than precise legal details, made the specifics of his illustration conform to his purpose."

ἄχρι (and ἄχρις): i) prep with gen until, as far as; ii) conj until  
προθεσμια, ας f set time

### Verse 3

οὕτως καὶ ἡμεῖς, ὅτε ἦμεν νήπιοι, ὑπὸ τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου ἡμεθα δεδουλωμένοι·

οὕτως signals the application of the illustration.

ἡμεῖς "The first person plural of 4:3, as well as that of 4:5, ought to be understood as referring primarily to Jewish believers: in v3 as Paul's application of his illustration of the Jewish experience under the custodianship of the law and in vv 4-5 as Paul's quotation of an early Jewish Christian confessional portion, with vv 6-7, then, applying the thrust of the confession cited in vv 4-5 to his Gentile converts' situation and therefore reverting back to his usual second person plural 'you.'" Longenecker

στοιχεῖα, ὧν ἡ elements (of which the world is made), basic principles

"Building on the view of τα στοιχεῖα as being 'first principles' or 'elemental teachings,' he asserts here in 4:3 that the Mosaic law comprised in the Jewish experience those 'basic principles' given by God in preparation for the coming of Christ. His use of τοῦ κοσμοῦ ('of the world') seems also somewhat unique. For while στοιχεῖα τοῦ κοσμοῦ would have been taken by Greek writers cosmologically (e.g., the elements of the natural world), Paul takes κοσμος in an ethical sense to mean 'worldly' with its synonym being 'fleshly,' as opposed to 'spiritual' (cf. ... 5:13-26)..."

"When talking about the Gentile experience, it was paganism with its veneration of nature and cultic rituals that made up the Gentiles' 'basic principles' of religion. The use of τα στοιχεῖα τοῦ κοσμοῦ in Col 2:8, 20 is to be distinguished from its use here in Gal 4:3 and that of τα ἀσθενῆ καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεῖα ('the weak and miserable basic principles') in 4:9. For while Paul is speaking about first principles or rudimentary teachings in all four passages, his meaning varies in each of those passages in terms of the specific context (cf. also τα στοιχεῖα in Heb 5:12 and 2 Peter 3:10,12)." Longenecker

δεδουλωμένοι Verb, perf pass ptc, m nom pl  
δουλοῦμαι enslave, make (someone) a slave

#### Verse 4

ὅτε δὲ ἦλθεν τὸ πλήρωμα τοῦ χρόνου,  
ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ,  
γενόμενον ἐκ γυναικός, γενόμενον ὑπὸ νόμου,

Longenecker suggests that vv 4-5 incorporate confessional material from the early church. "Gal 4:4-5 is admittedly notoriously difficult to analyse as to its structure and provenance. Our own evaluation of the data and weighing of the various hypotheses offered in explanation is that what we have here is an early Christian confessional portion that Paul has drawn, either in whole or in part, from the Church's proclamation – a confession which, as narrative analysis suggests ... was based on the gospel story as told by the earliest Christians."

πλήρωμα, τὸς ἡ fulness, completeness, fulfilment

ἐξαπέστειλεν Verb, aor act indic, 3 s

ἐξαποστελλῶ send out, send away, send forth

Suggests the preexistence of the Son.

γενόμενον Verb, aor ptc, m acc & n nom & acc s γίνομαι

"The aorist middle use of γίνομαι ('be,' 'become') for γενναῶ ('beget'; in the passive 'be born') was common in Jewish circles." Longenecker

γυνή, αἰκός f woman, wife

Stresses Jesus' true humanity and his full identification with the situation of the Jews. "The early church spoke of Christ not only as being truly human and possessing a representative quality ('the Man') but also as 'born under the law' to offer a perfect obedience to God the Father on behalf of those under the law ('the Jew')." Longenecker

#### Verse 5

ἵνα τοὺς ὑπὸ νόμον ἐξαγοράσῃ, ἵνα τὴν υἰοθεσίαν ἀπολάβωμεν.

ἐξαγοράζω redeem, rescue

υἰοθεσία, ας f adoption, sonship

A word unique to Paul within the biblical writings.

ἀπολάβωμεν Verb, aor act subj, 1pl  
ἀπολαμβάνω

"The statements ... are probably to be interpreted as complementary facets of what Jewish believers in Jesus had experienced: (1) redemption from both the law's condemnation (cf. 3:13) and the law's supervision (cf. 3:23-25), and (2) reception of a new relationship with God, which involved primarily the enjoyment of full sonship rights." Longenecker

**Verse 6**

ὅτι δέ ἐστε υἱοί, ἐξαπέστειλεν ὁ θεὸς τὸ πνεῦμα τοῦ υἱοῦ αὐτοῦ εἰς τὰς καρδίας ἡμῶν, κρᾶζον· Ἀββα ὁ πατήρ.

ἐξαπέστειλεν see v.4

Most later MSS read ὕμων, conforming the pronoun to the earlier verb ἐστε. The shift to the second person plural in the verb arises from Paul's application of the confessional material in vv 4-5 to the Galatians. By then reverting to the first person plural pronoun, Paul identifies himself with his Galatian converts.

κρᾶζω cry out, call out

"Paul is not here setting out stages in the Christian life, whether logical or chronological. Rather, his emphasis is on the reciprocal relation or correlational nature of sonship and the reception of the Spirit...  
 "The primary function of the Spirit in one's life ... is not to cause a believer in Jesus to become a 'spiritual' or 'charismatic' person, as is so often popularly assumed, but to witness to the filial relation of the believer with God that has been established by the work of Christ – a witness both to the believer (so 3:2,5) and to God the Father (so here)... As a neuter participle κρᾶζον ('crying') agrees in gender with τὸ πνεῦμα ('the Spirit'), so identifying its subject. It is the Spirit who cries out to God the Father on behalf of the believer, though synonymously Paul can also say that the believer cries out to God the Father as energised by the Spirit (Rom 8:15).  
 "The content of the cry or acclamation epitomises the believer's new relationship with God: 'Father.'... The acclamation 'Father' stemmed primarily from Jesus' own consciousness and usage, with the early Christians' remembrance of Jesus' usage giving expression to their new realisation of a more intimate relationship with God 'in Christ'.  
 Longenecker

**Verse 7**

ὥστε οὐκέτι εἶ δοῦλος ἀλλὰ υἴος· εἰ δὲ υἴος, καὶ κληρονόμος διὰ θεοῦ.

ὥστε so that, with the result that

Summarises and concludes the argument of the previous verses and repeats the assertion of 3:26.

οὐκέτι adv no longer, no more

The second person singular εἰ "has the effect of bringing matters home to each individual person in view, without, of course, changing the persons designated." Longenecker

κληρονομος, ου see 3:28

Cf. Rom 8:17.

The unusual expression δια θεου, well supported by early witnesses, gave rise to a number of variants, including θεου δια Χριστου (Byz, TR).  
 "The addition of the prepositional phrase δια θεου ('through God') serves the twofold purpose of (1) reminding Paul's readers that their status as heirs is entirely the result of God's grace, not of their works or merit, and (2) assuring them of the certainty of their possession of that status, since it is the result of God's work on their behalf and not their own endeavours." Longenecker