

Trinity Lutheran Church

Norman, Oklahoma – www.tlcnorman.org

The Book of Galatians

Theme: “The True Gospel You Have Received”

Date: 7-24-22

Lesson: 19 - Chapter 3:21-28

TEXT AND STUDY

(21) Is the law then contrary to **the promises of God**?

Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could give life, then righteousness would indeed be by the law. (22) But the Scripture imprisoned everything under sin, so that the promise by faith in **Jesus Christ** might be given to those who believe.

(Ac 10:43; Rom 3:9-21; 4:16; 7:12; 8:2-4; 11:32)

(23) Now before faith came, we were held captive under the law, imprisoned until the coming faith would be revealed. (24) So then, the law was our guardian until **Christ** came, in order that we might be justified by faith. (25) But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian,

(Rom 7:4-8; 8:14-17; 10:4; 11:32; 1 Cor 4:15; Col 2:20)

(26) for in **Christ Jesus** you are all sons of **God**, through faith. (27) For as many of you as were baptized into **Christ** have put **on Christ**. (28) There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in **Christ Jesus**.

(Mt 28:19; Jn 10:16; 17:11; Rom 6:3-11; 10:12; 13:14; 1 Cor 12:13; Eph 2:14-16; Col 3:11)



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26. For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith.

Thus it prepares us for the new birth, which takes place through faith in **Christ Jesus**, not through the Law, as Paul dearly testifies: “You are all sons of **God** through faith.” It is as though he were saying: “Even though you have been troubled, humbled, and killed by the Law, the Law has not made you righteous. It has not made you sons of **God**, but faith has. Which faith? Faith in **Christ**. Therefore faith in **Christ**, not the Law, creates sons of **God**.” The same thing is written in John 1:12: “To all who believed, He gave power to become children of **God**.”

I leave it to the orators to explain, and expand upon, this topic of the inestimable grace and glory that we have in **Christ Jesus**, namely, that we miserable sinners, by nature children of wrath (Eph. 2:3), may arrive at this honor, that through faith in **Christ** we are made children and heirs of **God** and fellow heirs with **Christ** (Rom. 8:17), lords of heaven and earth. Nevertheless, no tongue, either of men or of angels (1 Cor. 13:1), could proclaim the glory of this magnificently enough.

27. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Putting on **Christ** is understood in two ways: according to the Law and according to the Gospel. According to the Law (Rom. 13:14), “Put on **the Lord Jesus Christ**; that is: Imitate the example and the virtues of **Christ**. Do and suffer what He did and suffered.” So also 1 Peter 2:21: “**Christ** suffered for us, leaving us an example, that we should follow in His steps.” In **Christ** we see the height of patience, gentleness, and love, and an admirable moderation in all things. We ought to put on this

adornment of **Christ**, that is, imitate these virtues of His. In this sense we can imitate other saints as well.

But to put on **Christ** according to the Gospel is a matter, not of imitation but of a new birth and a new creation, namely, that I put **on Christ Himself**, that is, His innocence, righteousness, wisdom, power, salvation, life, and Spirit. We were dressed in the leather garment of Adam, which is a deadly garment and the clothing of sin. That is, we were all subjected and sold into the slavery of sin; horrible blindness, ignorance, and a contempt and hatred of **God** are present in us. Besides, we are filled with evil lust, uncleanness, and greed. By propagation from Adam we have acquired this garment, that is, this corrupt and sinful nature, which Paul calls “the old man.” He must be put off with all his activities, so that from sons of Adam we may be changed into **sons of God** (Eph. 4:22 and Col. 3:9).

This does not happen by a change of clothing or by any laws or works; it happens by the rebirth and renewal that takes place in Baptism, as Paul says: “As many of you as were baptized have **put on Christ.**” Titus 3:5: “**He saved us**, in virtue of His own mercy, by the washing of regeneration.” For in those who have been baptized a new light and flame arise; new and devout emotions come into being, such as fear and trust in God and hope; and a new will emerges. This is what it means to put **on Christ** properly, truly, and according to the Gospel.

In Baptism, then, it is not the garment of the righteousness of the Law or of our own works that is given; but **Christ becomes our garment**. But He is not the Law, not a lawgiver, not a work; **He is the divine and inestimable gift that the Father has given to us to be our Justifier, Lifegiver, and Redeemer**. To put on **Christ** according to the Gospel, therefore, is to put on, not the Law or works but an inestimable gift, namely, the forgiveness of sins, righteousness, peace, comfort, joy in **the Holy Spirit**, salvation, life, and **Christ Himself**.

This passage must be studied carefully, in opposition to the fanatical spirits who minimize the majesty of Baptism and speak wickedly about it. Paul, by contrast, adorns Baptism with magnificent titles when he calls it “the washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit” (Titus 3:5). And here he says that all who have been baptized have put on **Christ**.

Now, as I have said, Paul is speaking about a “putting on,” not by imitation but by birth. He does not say: “Through Baptism you have received a token by which you have been enlisted in the number of the Christians”; this is what the sectarians imagine when they make of Baptism merely a token, that is, a small and empty sign. But he says: “As many of you as have been baptized have put on **Christ.**” That is: “You have been snatched beyond the Law into a new birth that took place in Baptism.

Therefore you are no longer under the Law, but you have been dressed in a new garment, that is, in the **righteousness of Christ.**” Therefore Paul teaches that Baptism is not a sign but **the garment of Christ**, in fact, that **Christ Himself is our garment**. Hence Baptism is a very powerful and effective thing. For when we have put **on Christ, the garment of our righteousness and salvation, then we also put on Christ, the garment of imitation.**

LIFE APPLICATION

“For as many of you as were baptized into **Christ** have put **on Christ.**”

Since we are clothed in Christ, how does affect every aspect of our lives?