

## 9. Learning Why Christ Took Our Curse

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to grow by faith. In order for new Christians to learn to grow by faith, they need the example of other Christians that are growing by faith. As parents, we have the opportunity to provide that example to our physical and spiritual children to help them learn to grow by faith. We also want to help our children learn why Christ took our curse. That will be the focus of our topic today.

Many people depend on their own works to try and become right with God. We want to help our physical and spiritual children learn how to explain to others that works will never save them. Galatians 3:10-12 says, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.’ But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for ‘the just shall live by faith.’ Yet the law is not of faith, but ‘the man who does them shall live by them.’” Here, we see that every person that is depending on their own works is under a curse. This curse is on every person that fails to obey even one single thing that is written in the law. Since all have sinned, the only way that anyone can be made right in the sight of God is by faith.

Ephesians 2:1 says, “And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins.” Before any person places his or her faith in Christ, that person is spiritually dead and separated from God. We want to help our children understand how to explain the fact that because of their sin, a person can only be made alive when Christ gives them life. A person has no spiritual life until Christ forgives their sins when they come to Christ by faith. As Galatians 3 tells us, it is faith that gives us this life. No law has ever caused a person to do right. Instead, the law shows people when they have broken the law. God’s law shows that all people are guilty before God. That is why every person has brought a curse upon themselves by their sin.

That is why Galatians 3:13-14 is so important for every person to understand. Those verses tell us, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree’), that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” We want to help our children learn to explain the fact that Christ became a curse for us in order to set us free from the curse of the law. 2 Corinthians 5:21 says, “For He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” Christ was without sin. As a result, the Father was able to place our sin on Christ when Christ was on the cross so that Christ could pay the penalty for our sin. That is how Christ became a curse for us.

The fact that Christ took our sin on Himself and became a curse for us also meant that the Father was able to place the righteousness of Christ on us at the moment we placed our faith in Christ and chose to depend on His payment for our sin instead of our own works. This change in our lives immediately brought blessing on our lives. We want to help our children understand that this blessing included the promise that we would receive the Holy Spirit through faith at the moment of salvation. Ephesians 1:13-14 says, “In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit

of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” We want to help our children learn to explain to others the fact that Christ gave them the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation as the down payment and guarantee of their eternal salvation.

The fact that God placed the righteousness of Christ on us is also important for our children to understand. Christ was righteous which means that Christ is without sin. He has never sinned in the past and He will never sin in the future. That means that in the sight of the Father that Christ is without sin. It also means that when the Father places the righteousness of Christ on us, the Father can now see us as without sin even though we still commit sins. This is explained for us in more detail in 1 John 2:1-2 where we read, “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” We can picture these verses like a courtroom.

We commit one or more sins. Revelation 12:10 says that Satan is the accuser of the brethren. As a result, Satan is our prosecuting attorney and he accuses us of our sins to the Father. These verses tell us that Christ is our Advocate or defense attorney when Satan accuses us. Christ says that He paid for our sin with His blood on the cross and that we accepted His payment by faith and placed our faith in what Christ had done to pay for our sin. The word “propitiation” means *that which satisfies*. When Christ says that He paid for our sin and we accepted that payment by faith, the Father says, “I am satisfied with the payment. Case dismissed.” This is the reason why Christ took our curse. He took our curse so that He could satisfy the requirement of a holy God, because the penalty for sin must be paid. By taking our curse, the Father could freely forgive us at the moment that we placed our faith in Christ and the payment that He made for our sins.

It is important to help our children understand that the forgiveness of their sins had nothing to do with our own works. It had everything to do with the fact that Christ paid the penalty for our sin and the Father was satisfied with that payment. God made a covenant with Abraham to illustrate this fact in Genesis 15. That covenant is used to show why Christ’s blood was the payment for our curse and that we could do nothing to either earn our salvation or lose our salvation.

Genesis 15:5-6 says, “Then He brought him outside and said, ‘Look now toward heaven, and count the stars if you are able to number them.’ And He said to him, ‘So shall your descendants be.’ And he believed in the LORD, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.” Here, we see that God made a promise to Abraham. Abraham believed by faith and God put that faith to the account of Abraham as righteousness. When Abraham asked how he could know that God would keep His promise, God told Abraham to kill certain animals and birds, divide them in half and lay the halves of each far enough apart that someone could walk between the pieces. This was the way that they made a blood covenant in that day.

When it came time for God and Abraham to walk together between the pieces of the animals and birds, God put Abraham to sleep and then God went alone between the pieces of the animals. Genesis 15:17 says, “And it came to pass, when the sun went down and it was dark, that behold,

there appeared a smoking oven and a burning torch that passed between those pieces.” God went between the pieces in the form of a smoking oven and a burning torch. Since God was the only One that signed the covenant by going between the pieces, God was the only One that could break the covenant. The blood of the animals made this a blood covenant. A blood covenant is an everlasting covenant.

Galatians 3:15-18 helps us to understand why God went through those pieces alone. Those verses say, “Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though *it is* only a man’s covenant, yet *if it is* confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it. Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as of many, but as of one, ‘And to your Seed,’ who is Christ. And this I say, *that* the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect. For if the inheritance *is* of the law, *it is* no longer of promise; but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.” God made that blood covenant 430 years before God gave Moses the law. That meant that the law could have no effect on the blood covenant. God made that covenant with Abraham and His Seed. That Seed is Christ. This was actually a promise to mankind that the Seed (Christ) would be the payment that would satisfy the Father as the payment for our sin.

Just as Abraham did not sign the covenant with God by walking between the pieces of the animals, we did not sign the new covenant that Christ made when He shed His blood on the cross as the payment for our sin. We cannot sign the new covenant but we do remember that new covenant. 1 Corinthians 11:25-26 says, “In the same manner *He* also *took* the cup after supper, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of Me.’ For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death till He comes.” Every time we have communion we are remembering that Christ took our curse so that we could receive forgiveness of sins and the gift of eternal life as a free gift.

The law reminded us that we are under a curse because we are all guilty of sin. Grace and truth came by Christ because He set us free from the penalty of our sin at the moment we repented of our sin of unbelief and accepted His payment for our sin by faith. That is why Ephesians 2:8-10 tells us, “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” Christ completed the work that made our salvation possible and we can only accept what Christ did for us by faith. God now makes it possible for us to walk by faith. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your physical and spiritual children to understand why Christ took our curse to set us free from the penalty of our sin.