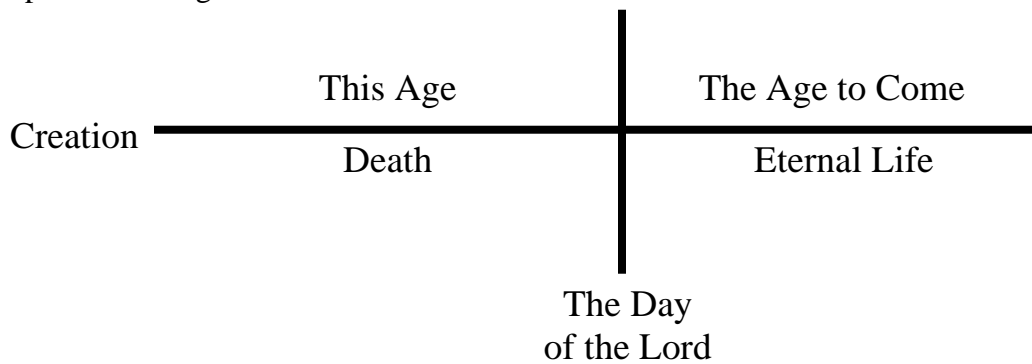


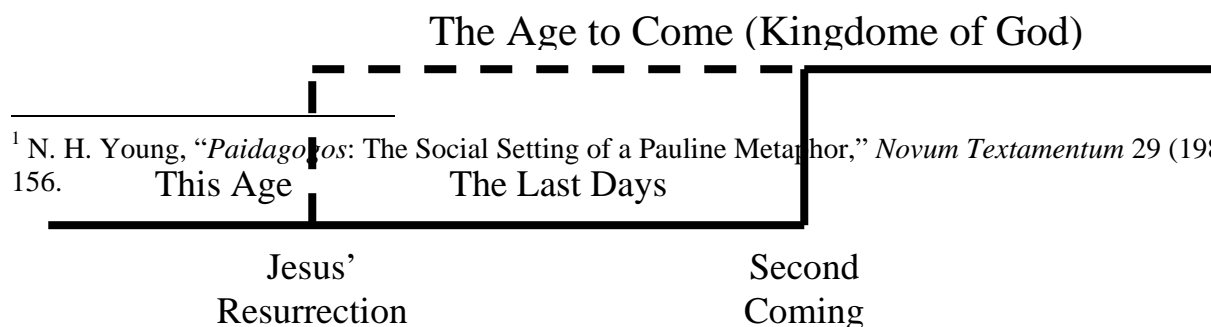
Galatians 3: 19-29—¹⁹“What, then, was the purpose of the law? It was added because of transgressions until the Seed to whom the promise referred had come. The law was put into effect through angels by a mediator. ²⁰A mediator, however, does not represent just one party; but God is one. ²¹Is the law, therefore, opposed to the promises of God? Absolutely not! For if a law had been given that could impart life, then righteousness would certainly have come by the law. ²²But the Scripture declares that the whole world is a prisoner of sin, so that what was promised, being given through faith in Jesus Christ, might be given to those who believe. ²³Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed. ²⁴So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. ²⁵Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law. ²⁶You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, ²⁷for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. ²⁸There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.”

²⁴**So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.**

- “**put in charge**” that is the law was a “pedagogue.”
- “The child generally came to the pedagogue immediately after the mother, wet-nurse and nanny had completed the educational process at its most basic level. This was usually at age seven, and the boy remained in the charge of the pedagogue until late adolescence.”¹
- Redemptive history divided into two ages separated by the Day of the Lord. Notice again from chapter one.
- **Galatians 1:4**—“...the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from the present evil age.”



- The Kingdom of God belongs to the Age to Come, but the Kingdom of God has already come.
- **Luke 10:9**—“Heal the sick who are there and tell them, ‘The kingdom of God is near you.’”
- **Luke 11:20**—“But if I drive out demons by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God has come to you.”



¹ N. H. Young, “*Paidagogos*: The Social Setting of a Pauline Metaphor,” *Novum Testamentum* 29 (1987), 156.

²⁵**Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.**

Fung: “With the coming of Christ, the way of justification by faith in Christ is thrown open, not as just another possibility, but as the only way of obtaining righteousness. By saying that ‘we are no longer under a custodian’ (RSV), Paul is in fact speaking of ‘the historic succession of one period of revelation upon another and the displacement of the law by list:’ from the vantage point of salvation history, the validity of the law ceased with the coming of faith in the coming of Christ.”²

- At this point the reader may suspect that Paul is opposed to the law and good works. When Luther deals with this passage and others like it he insists that this is not the case. Both law and good works have their place, their divinely appointed and absolutely essential functions. The point is simply that they must not be allowed to intrude in the matter of justification.³
- **Luther:** “When we are involved in a discussion of justification, there is no room for speaking about the Law... This Bridegroom, Christ, must be alone with His bride in His private chamber, and all the family and household must be shunted away. But later on, when the Bridegroom opens the door and comes out, then let the servants return to take care of them and serve them food and drink. Then let works and love begin.”⁴
- However, the law continues to be not only helpful but absolutely necessary in preaching the gospel because God uses it to prepare people for grace. Luther likened it to a hammer.
- **Luther:** “If someone is not a murderer, adulterer, or thief, and abstains from external sins... he develops the presumption of righteousness and relies on his good works... The proclamation of free grace and the forgiveness of sins does not enter his heart and understanding... Therefore this presumption of righteousness is a huge and horrible monster. To break and crush it, God needs a large and powerful hammer, that is, the Law.”⁵
- **Luther:** “Therefore the Law is a minister and a preparation for grace. For God is the God of the humble... of those who have been brought down to nothing at all... When the Law drives you this way, so that you despair of everything that is your own and seek help and solace from Christ, then it is being used correctly.”⁶
- **1 Timothy 1: 6-8**—“Some have wandered away from these and turned to meaningless talk. They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm. We know that the law is good if one uses it properly.”
- However, even beyond that, both Calvin and Luther believed that the Law can and should be used with the Christian where and when he or she is still living in the flesh; that is, under the control of the sinful nature.

² F Ronald Y. K. Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, in *The New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1986), 170.

³ See Stephen Westerholm, *Israel's Law and the Church's Faith: Paul and His Recent Interpreters* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 8.

⁴ Martin Luther, *Luther's Works*, 55 vols. J. Pelikan, ed. (Saint Louis: Concordia, 1963), 26:137-138.

⁵ Luther, *Luther's Works*, 26:310.

⁶ Luther, *Luther's Works*, 26:314-316.

- **Luther:** “As long as we live in a flesh that is not free of sin, so long the Law keeps coming back and performing its function There is still need for a custodian to discipline and torment the flesh, that powerful jackass, so that by this discipline sins may be diminished and the way prepared for Christ.”⁷

²⁶**You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,**

- This was probably a well-known saying in the early church. On five different occasions Paul makes reference to “trustworthy sayings.”
 - Verse 26 was probably similar to those kinds of sayings.

in Christ Jesus,

- Deissmann proposed an analogy of a person being in air and air in a person, and so postulated that believers at conversion actually come to live in the ethereal Spirit and pneumatic Christ.”⁸

²⁷**for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.**

- **Fung:** “Baptism is also regarded as ‘putting on’ Christ, who is thought of a garment enveloping the believer and symbolizing his new spiritual existence.”⁹
- The baptism in view in Gal. 3:27 is almost certainly water baptism; this being the case, its juxtaposition with faith, especially the fact that union with Christ is ascribed both to faith (v. 26) and to baptism (v. 27), raises the question of the exact relationship between the two...Such a view simply ignores the close connection between faith and baptism in the present instance; the fact that in this chapter faith is mentioned fifteen times and baptism only once would even by itself compel agreement with the dictum that Paul ‘by no means unconditionally attributes magic influence to baptism.’¹⁰
- **Rudolph Schnackenburg**—“St. Paul saw in Baptism the normal but not necessary, the helpful but not indispensable sign and seal put upon the act of faith appropriating the gift of God in Christ.”¹¹
- **Book of Common Prayer** “Baptism is the “outward and visible sign of [an] inward and spiritual grace.”
- **Stott:** “It is inconceivable that Paul should now substitute baptism for circumcision and teach that we are in Christ by baptism! The apostle clearly makes *faith* the means of our union with Christ. He mentions faith five times in this paragraph, but baptism only once. Faith secures the union; baptism signifies it outwardly and visibly.”¹²
- “The close association of faith and baptism in Paul (and throughout the NT), however, must never blind us to the fact that these are two distinct features of the one complex of Christian initiation. Each has its particular function in becoming a Christian, without ever being amalgamated infused, as though, for example, baptism serves the same function as faith and so makes faith unnecessary, or conversely faith serves the same function as baptism and so

⁷ Luther, *Luther's Works*, 26:350.

⁸ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 153.

⁹ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 171.

¹⁰ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 171. Fung is quoting Rudolph Bultmann, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1951), 1: 312.

¹¹ Rudolph Schnackenburg, *Baptism in the Thought of St. Paul* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964), 127.

¹² John Stott, *The Message of Galatians* (London: Inter-Varsity, 1968), 99.

makes baptism unnecessary. The two in Paul's mind are always related, though never thought of as identical or as supplements to one another."¹³

- **Longenecker:** "Paul is not simply replacing one external rite (circumcision) by another external rite (baptism). If that were so, i.e., if he viewed baptism as a supplement to faith in much the same way that the Judaizers viewed circumcision as a supplement to faith, he could have simply settled the dispute at Galatia by saying Christian baptism now replaces Jewish circumcision. He would certainly have saved himself a great deal of argument. But Paul saw baptism in no such light...while faith and baptism are part and parcel of becoming a Christian, they always to be distinguished. Each has its own function."¹⁴

²⁸**There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.**

- First, *there is no distinction of race...* This includes all nations of every race, color and language... Secondly, *there is no distinction of rank...* in Christ snobbery is prohibited and class distinctions are rendered void.... Thirdly, *there is no distinction of gender.*¹⁵
- **Stott:** "This remarkable assertion of the equality of the sexes was made centuries in advance of the times. Women were nearly always despised in the ancient world, even in Judaism, and not infrequently exploited and ill-treated as well. But here the assertion is made that in Christ male and female are one and equal—and made by Paul, who is ignorantly supposed by many to have been an anti-feminist."¹⁶
- "It is noteworthy that in the third antithesis the words used are not the customary terms for man and woman but the more technical terms denoting male and female, thus indicating that what is in view is the general relationship between the sexes and not the specific relationship between husband and wife. The statement that there is no 'male and female' in Christ does not mean, as was believed in later Gnosticism, that in the new era mankind is restored to the pristine androgynous state; nor does it mean that all male-female distinctions have been obliterated in Christ, any more than that there is no racial difference between the Christian Jew and the Christian Gentile."¹⁷
- "[T]he context clearly shows that the primary emphasis of the verse is on *unity* in Christ rather than on equality. The masculine gender of 'one' suggest that the meaning here is that all who are in Christ form a corporate unity..."¹⁸
- "It seems precarious to appeal to this verse in support of any view of the role of women in the Church, for two reasons: (a) Paul's statement is not concerned with the role relationships of men and women within the Body of Christ but rather with their common initiation into it through (faith and) baptism; (b) the male/female distinction, unlike the other two, has its roots in creation, so that the parallelism between the male/female pair and the other pairs may not be unduly pressed."¹⁹

¹³ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 155-156..

¹⁴ Longenecker, *Galatians*, 156.

¹⁵ Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, 99.

¹⁶ Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, 100.

¹⁷ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 175.

¹⁸ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 176.

¹⁹ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 176; footnote 44. For further information on this question see John Piper & Wayne Grudem, *Recovering Biblical Manhood & Womanhood* (Wheaton: Crossway, 1995), H. Wayne House, *The Role of Women in Ministry* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), and Stephen Clark, *Man and*

- **Stott:** “A word of caution must be added. This great statement of verse 28 does not mean that racial, social and sexual distinctions are actually obliterated... When we say that Christ has abolished these distinctions, we mean not that they do not exist, but that they do not matter. They are still there, but they no longer create any barriers to fellowship.”²⁰
- Earlier this year, I was in a class on the history of Renewal African American Christianity. During the course the subject of women’s ordination came up. Part of one of the arguments was that to deny full ordination to women (including the role of senior pastor, etc.) was to deny actual ontological equality. Galatians 3: 38 was appealed to as the basis for this position. I have included part of the online exchange between myself and one of the other students.

Jeff, You stated your position in a scholarly fashion and I respect your opinion. Of course I disagree with it, but it was stated quite well. You said: “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.*’ *But ontological equality does not necessarily equate to role interchangeability.*”

Because our class is on African American Pentecostals, let's focus on that subgroup when looking at your statement. Do you believe there is no role interchangeability between Jew and Greek (races) as well as slave and free (class)? These are the arguments that blacks have used to combat racism and classism/slavery in white America. I doubt you would agree with your statement in regards to these two so why use it for women and men? Just wondering...

* * *

Dear _____, Sorry for the delay in responding to your post. You ask a good question. Allow me to put your question back into the first century, in the southern region of Galatia. When Paul wrote “*There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus,*” he was, as I indicated earlier, addressing the issue of ontological equality [not role interchangeability]. A slave owner was not better than his or her slave; a Jew was not better than an Arab; and a man was not superior to a woman. However, Paul was also fully aware that when the Galatian Christians walked out of the room where they met those that were slaves still had to report to their masters; those that were Arabs could not go for a visit into the Jewish Temple, and those women that were married still would submit to their husbands. In other words, his statement about equality before God did not result in an absence of role distinctions. So in that sense, I would say, no, there was no role interchangeability between Jews and Greeks nor between slaves and slave owners. A slave simply could not walk out of after reading Paul’s letter and inform his master that he was no longer going to serve him because of Galatians 3:28. My point is not to sanction slavery (any more than I think Paul’s point was), but to demonstrate that the passage has something specific in view (that all men and women stand on a level playing field before God—there are no superior

Woman in Christ: An Examination of the Roles of Man and Woman in the Light of Scripture and the Social Sciences (Ann Arbor: Servant, 1980).

²⁰ Stott, *The Message of Galatians*, 100.

positions), but the notion of women's ordination is simply nowhere in view. That, it seems to me, is the problem when people appeal to this passage for things like that—it simply isn't addressing that subject.

²⁹**If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.**

- **Fung:** "From vv. 26-29 it is seen that believers are individually God's sons and collectively the true offspring of Abraham...that it is fulfilled in reception of the Spirit; hence, *justification by faith, reception of the Spirit by faith, and becoming sons of God by faith* are intimately linked together as different expressions for the fulfillment of the promise. From this we may infer that these three are not separate and distinct experiences but closely interwoven parts or aspects of the single experience of faith-union with Christ. Experientially, they take place at the same time in fulfillment of the same promise; logically, however, they are distinguishable and their logical relationships to one another will become clear in the next section of the text."²¹

1. *Justification by faith,*
2. *Reception of the Spirit by faith,* and
3. *Becoming sons of God by faith* are intimately linked together as different expressions for the fulfillment of the promise.

Application

- If God thought it wise and helpful *not* to let the sediment of pride and rebellion and distrust lie quietly at the bottom of the human heart, but instead, stirred it up and made it visible by demanding the obedience which comes from faith, then that's what preaching should aim to do. More than ever, it seems that there is a need for preaching the law to "torment the flesh" so that the lives of "carnal Christians" will be stirred up and come to a crisis. Could it be that one of the reasons we see raindrops of blessing at Northlake instead of showers is that week after week dozens people sit in these services with a layer of sinful muck at the bottom of their lives with no intention whatsoever of doing anything about it? If so, let's pray that God will use his Word to stir it up, so it can be seen for what it is, so there can be repentance and forgiveness and cleansing and renewal.
- **Carson:** "It is possible to 'build the church' with such shoddy materials that at the last day you have nothing to show for your labor. People may come, feel 'helped,' join in corporate worship, serve on committees, teach Sunday school classes, bring their friends, enjoy 'fellowship,' raise funds, participate in counseling sessions and self-help groups, but still not really know the Lord. If the church is being built with large portions of charm, personality, easy oratory, positive thinking, managerial skills, powerful and emotional experiences, and people smarts, but without the repeated, passionate, Spirit-anointed proclamation of "Jesus Christ and him crucified,' *we may be winning more adherents than converts...the fundamental nonnegotiable, that without which the church is no longer the church, is the gospel, God's 'folly,' Jesus Christ and him crucified.*"²²

²¹ Fung, *The Epistle to the Galatians*, 178.

²² D. A. Carson, *The Cross & Christian Ministry: An Exposition of Passages From 1 Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993), 80.