

Galatians Unearthed Part 5: 2:19-21; 3:1-4; Dead to Law and Sin; Gentiles Get Circumcised Later? (1/13/2018)

The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lu9Yf3I8zAk>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a written document. All the Scripture verses are from the New King James Version unless otherwise noted and are in the red text. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

If you remember from last week, we hit a turning point in this series when the Apostle Paul brought the Torah into the discussion. When you think about it, he didn't have an option. We were looking at this controversy he was dealing with in the first century, whether or not the Gentiles have to be circumcised to be saved. We were looking right in the Torah where the command is explicit that if you want to be part of Abraham's household, you're going to have to be circumcised. So Paul doesn't have a choice here; he is going to have to deal with the Law. He has to bring this into the conversation, and that is exactly what he did.

Just as a way of reminder, what did Paul do when he brought the Torah to the table? He established the most important thing we need to understand regarding the Torah, which is you cannot be saved in and of yourself by your efforts of keeping the Torah. Your works in the Torah cannot save you. That is the foundation. Everything else can be built upon that, but if you don't have that, you will be building upon sand. You will be in deception. So Paul lays this out that your works cannot save you.

Why does Scripture say we can't be justified by the Law and our works? Because we've all failed to keep it. Does Paul leave it right there? No. He does not leave us to our own demise. He recognized this situation, and he throws those anchor statements out that clearly state we are not justified by the Law. Does that mean you turn your back on it; does that mean you walk away from the Law ? God forbid! What does it say in Romans 3:31? **Do we then make void the Law through faith? Certainly not! We establish it.** We stand on the Torah of the LORD.

As we continue today, we're going to see Paul goes even further into this discussion of the Torah. He discusses Torah's relationship with us, how it interacts with us, how we interact the Law, how the Law interacts with sin, and how sin interacts with us.

Let's go to Galatians 2:19—**For I through the Law died to the Law that I might live to God.** To most of you, this might sound a little bit crazy. Right? If we're just to isolate this statement in and of itself, it certainly sounds to me that Paul is saying he is done with the Law. The Law no longer is going to be instructing him because it has nothing to offer him. He has died to the Law, and he's moving away from it. That is what it sounds like doesn't it?

The question becomes, is that what is really being conveyed? Most of you should have the answer if you were here last week. You read this, and you think, "This can't be." Your instinct is to think he's abandoning the Torah, but because of the information you have, you should have a red flag. You should

understand that can't be what Paul is saying. I believe most of you would recognize the validity of the Torah, so that can't be what Paul is saying. But do you understand what Paul is saying when he makes statements like that? This is why we are going to dig into this a little bit today because we need to be able to express to our fellow believing brothers and sisters, even those who are new to keeping Torah and are coming into the faith, what Paul was saying. If they are going to read the Apostle Paul, they're going to need some oversight, teaching, and mentorship.

When we read statements like—**For I through the Law died to the Law that I might live to God**—we know Paul is not saying the Torah is done away with. That statement is simply a fragment. So then, what does it mean? How are we supposed to understand it?

I have to tell you there is a lesson here for us that is so deep and profound. We need to glean from what he is dealing with and trying to convey. I think the best way to assess this is to get to know the Apostle Paul better. I talked about this a little bit last week. We need to get to know his literary style and how he utilizes specific words in the context he uses them. He has a particular writing style, and if you look at his epistles in totality, you're going to start to understand him at a level that will probably surprise you. So we are going to do that.

We are going to go to Paul's Epistle to the Romans. As I mentioned last week, Romans is the comprehensive version of Galatians. Romans is concise and crystal clear, whereas Galatians is more of a summary. I had someone ask me why Paul wouldn't have written to the Galatians in the same comprehensive fashion he wrote to the Romans. You cannot go through the book of Romans and say the Law is done away with. You can't do it because there are so many anchor statements all over the place, and Paul flat out tells us we are supposed to establish the Law. Paul makes it clear if we are thinking with a carnal mind, we will walk away from the Law. So why not write that way to the Galatians?

I actually want to answer that question because it might help give you some perspective and more understanding as to why we're relying so much upon Romans, and why scholars rely upon it when they're going through the study of Galatians.

Think about this. Paul never went to Rome until the very end of his ministry. In fact, when he wrote the epistle to the Romans, he had never been there. With the Galatians, he had been to that area of the land many times. Paul has interacted with them face-to-face. He had been teaching them, answering their questions, spending time with them, praising the LORD, and praying together. They developed a relationship. There are things Paul knows about them. He knows what he's already told them. He has dealt with many of their questions. Yet with the Romans, he's never once met them. Because of that, you might think Paul is going to be a little more deliberate, a little more careful, in his Epistle to the Romans to ensure they're not going to mistake or misunderstand exactly what he said. That's why Galatians is written in the fashion it is, versus the way Paul wrote his Epistle to the Roman.

So we're going to go to the comprehensive version because we will find Paul actually makes the very same statement in his Epistle to the Romans that he makes to the Galatians. This is what he says in Romans 7:4— **Therefore my brethren, you also have become dead to the Law through the body of Christ.**

These are virtually identical statements. Romans 7:4—**Therefore my brethren, you also have become dead to the Law through the body of Christ** versus Galatians 2:19—**For I through the Law died to the Law that I might live to God.** So we are looking at virtually identical statements—you're dead to the Law. Keep in mind the book was written to Gentiles. Paul is being inclusive, in that both Jew and Gentile are dead to the Law.

When you simply look at the statements, it looks like the Law has no more impact on our life. It is done away with. Well, the first thing I want to bring to the table is the fact Paul in his Epistle to the Romans utilizes the terms Law and sin in a transposable fashion, at times, to both mean sin. In fact, let me show you this in Roman 6:11. In Romans 6:11, Paul says—**dead to sin**, and in Romans 7:4, he says—**dead to**

Romans 6:11- Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be **dead indeed to sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Romans 7:4- Therefore, my brethren, you also have become **dead to the law** through the body of Christ, .

the Law. In fact, Paul does this multiple times. I am not going to show you all of them, but you need to pay attention. He is using sin and Law in a transposable state.

How in the world can he use sin and Law in the same context unless they mean the same thing? But do they mean the same thing? Well, Paul knows the answer to that question. Paul knows the struggles you're going to have with his writings, and brilliantly he throws the anchor out. This is what he says in Romans 7:7—**What shall we say then? Is the Law sin? Certainly not! On the contrary.** He recognizes, “Yes, I recognize how I use sin and Law in the exact same context, but guess what people? They are not the same; in fact, they couldn't be farther apart. Sin is vile and ugly. Law is holy, beautiful, and righteous.”

So what are we supposed to take away from this? How are we supposed to understand this? What's he trying to teach us? Well, interestingly enough the Apostle Paul provides a very special key, if you will, that unlocks a very special door to a world of understanding. It is just a little, tiny statement tucked away towards the end of his first Epistle to the Corinthians. When we look at this statement, it is going to clear up all the fog regarding how Paul could say we're dead to the Law, and yet say we're dead to sin, and sin sounds like the Law, and the Law sounds like sin. This verse brings total clarity. When you come to these moments where you see something that makes everything make perfect sense, it's absolutely beautiful.

Let me take you to 1 Corinthians 15:56—**The sting of death is sin and the strength of sin is the Law.** That is the key to understanding how Paul could possibly utilize these terms sin and Law in the very same context, yet they don't mean the same thing. **The sting of death is sin; the strength of sin is the Law.**

I love to use this analogy because this is exactly what he's conveying. When a snake bites a person, if the snake is non-venomous, nothing happens. If the snake is venomous, that person is going to die if they don't get help. If he gets bit by a black mamba, and there is no help, that person is going to die. Think about it like this; the bite is sin, and the venom is the Law. The venom is what kills. Sin has no power. You need to understand this regarding the relationship of the Law and sin and of us with sin and the Law. Sin in and of itself has absolutely no power. None of us would die in sin if it were not for the Law. The Law is the venom. I always like to say, “Sin will dig your grave, but the Law will put you in it.”

That's the reality. The Law is the power because it condemns you to death. So think about what Yeshua is. He is the antivenom. If you get bit by a black mamba, the venom starts running through your veins at an incredible rate of speed. Unless you get the antivenom, you are going to die. Yeshua is the antivenom to the condemnation of the Law. Romans 8:1—**There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (emphasis added).** There is an anchor statement there. Did you catch it? **There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.** Sin is not condemning us. It is the Law that condemns us. However, the Law has no power to condemn us when we are in Messiah Yeshua.

Does that mean we can go off and do whatever we want to do? No. Why not? Because there is no condemnation specifically for those—**who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit (Romans 8:1).** They walk in holiness.

Continuing in Romans 8:2—**For the Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the Law of sin and death.** It set us free; it's the antivenom. Yes, I was hit by a venomous snake; yes, the venom went through and was going to kill me. But thanks be to God I have the antivenom. I have faith in the Savior, Messiah Yeshua.

Moving on to Galatians 2:20—**I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.** Isn't that interesting? Paul talks about dying or being dead to sin. He talks about being dead to the Law, and now he's dead with the Messiah. Pay attention because we're learning how this whole relationship works. He's now dead with the Messiah Yeshua.

When you read this passage, knowing what is going on in Galatia, you can feel the weight of Paul's heart. You can feel the weight of his faith and the gravity of his devotion; he is totally committed to the Messiah Yeshua. For the Apostle Paul, Yeshua is at the center of the universe. There is nothing else. Yeshua is the end all be all. The Apostle Paul's life has been radically changed because of what Yeshua did at the cross. So when we look at this statement, Paul truly understands the great price the Lamb of God paid because Paul declares he has been crucified with Mashiach.

To put the statement into context, I want to take you to Paul's Epistles to the Romans. Paul is going to draw upon this very imagery and go deeper. Roman 6:1-3—**¹What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ²Certainly not!** This is an anchor statement. How do we know this? The tipoff is—**Certainly not!** Continuing—**How shall we who died to sin [here Paul is talking about being dead to sin] live any longer in it? ³Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?**

Think about that statement. This is getting deep and profound regarding what Paul says when he says he has been crucified with the Mashiach. We are getting the full perspective of what Paul is talking about. He is talking about his public profession; he's talking about going into a baptism, into a mikveh, which is the very imagery of Yeshua being alive and then being buried in the tomb. So when we go through immersion, baptism, which is commanded for every one of those who call upon the name of Yeshua, we are going into the water as if we are going into the earth. This represents going into the grave or dying to self. We're dying to sin; we're dying with Yeshua. Through that death, we become dead to the Law because the Law can't say anything against us. It can no longer condemn us for our sinful actions.

Romans 6:4—**therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life (emphasis added).** When you get to know Paul a little bit better, all these terms he uses such as saying, "I was dead to sin, I was dead to the Law, and I've died with Mashiach" all makes perfect sense. Just to bring this full circle, what can the Law say against Yeshua? He was perfect. He was a man without sin; He was the perfect sacrifice. Therefore, for us to go with Him into death, we die to sin. That means no longer do we live in it, but we become dead to the Law because the Law cannot condemn us. It's the perfect story. It's victory!

Moving on to Galatians 2:21—**I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died in vain" (emphasis added).** Remember the backdrop? The Galatians are falling into the lie they can't be saved unless they're circumcised in the flesh. Yet here you have Paul, a Jew who is of the circumcision, telling these Galatians that he—**do[es] not set aside the grace of God.** It's critical you see that he's putting this on himself even though he is a Jew and is physically circumcised. He even recognizes, "I can't set aside that grace." He actually does just the opposite. He trusts in the grace for salvation.

So the fact Paul has to tell the Galatians he doesn't set aside the grace of God, what does that indicate? It indicates the Galatians are setting aside the grace of God. That is frightening because now we're talking about salvation. These people are denying the grace that has come to them.

Because they are doing this, we continue in Galatians 3:1—**O foolish Galatians!** The Greek word for foolish is ἀνόητος. It means thoughtless; you who are without thought; you're not thinking. Continuing—**Who has bewitched you?** The Greek for bewitched is βασκαίνω. It deals with witchcraft or with a spell. Someone who has come and cast a spell and is controlling your thoughts. Paul continues in Galatians 3:1—**Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth (emphasis added)?** Again, I've been setting this up week after week. Every time we see Paul utilize the words "truth of the Gospel" or "the truth" he's explicitly referring to the mystery of God in that the Gentiles are not required to be circumcised to be saved. They are not required to do this in order to have full membership status. That is how he is using this term.

You need to understand what he's actually dealing with here. He is saying, "You've been bewitched; you're not obeying the truth." This is truth which Paul himself came out to deliver. Continuing with Galatians 3:1-2—**before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified? ² This only I want to learn from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by the hearing of faith?** Do you understand what that statement means? He is saying, "Did you really receive the Spirit of God by going out and getting circumcised in the flesh? Is that how you receive the anointing? Is that how you received your absolute guarantee to an eternal inheritance?" That is what the Spirit of God is. It is the living proof of your eternal inheritance. Is that how the Galatians received the Spirit of God? Obviously, Paul was asking a rhetorical question. No. They receive the Spirit of God because of faith. Through faith they were circumcised with the circumcision made without hands.

Moving on to Galatians 3:3—**Are you so foolish?** This is the second time he calls them completely thoughtless. In other words, a modern-day translation would be, "Have you lost your minds!" Continuing—**Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?** Remember, there were Jews who were going out who were a faction. They were not part of the apostles and the Jerusalem council. They were coming to bring a different message. They were saying, "You can't be

saved unless you're circumcised. You can't be made perfect without circumcision. You can't be perfect like Messiah Yeshua unless you do this." You can just see what these men were peddling.

Galatians 3:4—**Have you suffered so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain?** I have to tell you this little passage packs a wallop of information. The first thing I want you to acknowledge here is the Galatians were running the race; they were holding the line. By his statement, Paul acknowledges they were holding the line even to the point of experiencing persecution. I want you to think about that for a second. Because these Galatians believed in the truth of the gospel, and they believe they have the beautiful inheritance that was locked through faith in the Messiah Yeshua, they suffered for that faith by these other Jewish brethren who told them, "No, you can't be saved unless you are circumcised."

Looking at this verse—**Have you suffered so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain?** What else does this tell you? It's really something amazing when we see—**Have you suffered so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain?** Just ponder that. Let this sink in because I have to tell you this is amazing. The fact is these Galatians were continuing in the faith, but then something happened. Might it be the reason the Galatians were giving in was because of persecution? I would say, "Absolutely." There isn't a question about that. What do we read about in Daniel 7? Satan goes to wear out the Saints. He goes to persecute and intimidate them. He is relentless, and he does not give up. He keeps coming back and coming back. How many of you can testify the enemy keeps coming, and coming, and coming. Pretty soon, at some point, you get on your knees and cry out to the LORD. If you're trying to fight him according to your own abilities, it's not going to work. You need supernatural strength because you are dealing with a supernatural entity.

This is the reality, and this is one of the things that is mind-blowing about this statement. We are given so much information in the verse. The Galatians had continued in the faith, but the devil would not leave them alone. He would not relent. He kept coming because his sole goal is to destroy the gospel. That is his primary goal, destroy the gospel. So now Paul is asking them, "Is it all for nothing? Did you experience this for nothing?"

I want to jump ahead to Galatians 5:11 because Paul is going to draw this onto himself—**And I, brethren, if I still preach circumcision, why do I still suffer persecution? Then the offense of the cross has ceased.** It's not just the Galatians who are suffering. The people who are bringing the message, such as the Apostle Paul, are suffering persecution. You can imagine what this is doing to him knowing he's been suffering persecution for nothing. He has suffered for nothing because they're walking away from the faith. Of course, he doesn't want to think this is vanity either. He has put himself on the line for this truth, and he has been literally ostracized by his own Jewish brethren because of it. Paul is paying a steep price for holding the line. He's being persecuted for it.

Now, I want to bring something to the table that is vitally important. You need to recognize in this passage Paul never stops preaching the truth of the gospel. He never stops preaching it is not required for the Gentiles to get circumcised to be saved. He also did not teach it was merely a temporary thing, and at some point in the future, over time, you're going to get circumcised. You can't find one fragment of that anywhere in the New Testament. It doesn't exist.

Unfortunately, we've got to do a little house cleaning. There is what I call the pendulum effect. When you are into Messianic Judaism or Hebrew Roots, there's a pendulum effect. You believe the Church is completely Lawless; they've lost their minds. So then we've got to come to the other side. It is like a swinging pendulum. The problem is, it just keeps going, and it gets just as crazy for the Messianics as for

the Church. It is like the pot calling the kettle black. Let me ask you a question. How many of you have heard a teaching that is out there now in the Hebrew Roots? It is not so much a messianic, but it is more Hebrew Roots. The teaching states when Gentiles come into the knowledge of Torah, and they've confessed the Messiah, they're not required to get circumcision on the front end. However, as time goes on, they're going to have to do this because the Torah commands it. How many of you have heard this teaching I am talking about?

Unfortunately, I get phone calls from people in crisis. They have been told they can't be Torah observant unless they get circumcised. Let me begin by saying this, I want to forewarn you of this teaching so when you come against it you'll know what to do. The first thing I want to say, and I'm not going to sugarcoat it, it's a lie from the pit of hell. It is a completely erroneous teaching. In fact, I would tell you it is diabolically deceptive. The concept goes against everything we read about in the Bible.

Paul told Timothy something that applies to this situation. It is something we need to listen to very carefully. We are at the end of the age, and one of the things Paul told Timothy was to be careful as there would be people— **desiring to be teachers of the Law, understanding neither what they say nor the things which they affirm (1 Timothy 1:7)**. Unfortunately, there are plenty of those teachers alive today. There are plenty who desire to be teachers of the Torah, and they do not understand the things they say. They don't even understand the things they affirm. This is just reality.

So I want to be clear. At no point did Paul ever state the Gentiles who have come into the faith while uncircumcised were to get circumcised. You will not find it in Scripture. So what we're going to do is we're going to start to dig into this. I want to take you back to Galatians 3:4—**Have you suffered so many things in vain--if indeed it was in vain?** If in fact Paul believed what some of the teachers are teaching today, then riddle me this. Why, pray tell, is Paul rebuking them for becoming circumcised in the flesh by giving into this teaching.

Remember what the problem in Galatia was. The Gentiles were falling into this trap that they believed they could not be saved unless circumcised according to the Torah, and this was some time after they received and accepted the gospel. They had accepted the gospel long before they were told this. Now, Paul hears they're becoming circumcised, and now he has to write this epistle pistol. If I was to buy into this concept that at some point in time after accepting the gospel all the gentiles absolutely have to be circumcised, then I would have to recognize this epistle not as an epistle of rebuke but an epistle of praise. Think about it. Paul would be commending them chapter after chapter for getting circumcised. He would have been telling them, "I'm so glad you guys finally came into this knowledge, I am glad this has been revealed to you. I'm so glad you have the conviction. It's a beautiful thing you have this conviction."

However, that is not what Paul does. In fact, let me take you back to Galatians 1:8—**But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.** Does that sound like a temporary message? Does that sound like some time released capsule where if you come into the faith, and if you're an uncircumcised Gentile when you come into the faith, you're like a time release capsule? Does this sound like, as time goes on you have to be circumcised according to the Torah or you can't be saved? Paul's message in Galatians 1:8 was never to end. In fact, Paul warns by saying— **if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, let him be accursed.** Cut off. That person is not to be part of the faith.

You need to think about these men who teach it; what about the men who listened to it? This is why Paul is getting to the point, you're abandoning grace. This is salvational.

What is ironic to me is here we have this beautiful revival happening throughout the world. I am talking about China, Indonesia, the U.K., America, and other countries where Christians are waking up to the reality the Torah isn't dead in their lives. They are coming to understand it is applicable; it is valid. They are waking up to Passover; they're waking up to the Shabbat, and they are waking up to Israel. This beautiful revival is a move of the Holy Spirit. Isn't it interesting with this return of awareness, this generation is returning to the first century, Jewish roots of the faith? They are turning back to the Church we read about in Acts. It is happening right now.

However, let me tell you with this awakening you inherit first-century problems. I've never had the Bible, the New Testament, come as alive as we are seeing today because of the movement of what is happening with God's people. The Holy Spirit is pricking their hearts to return to truth. It is then we see the very same issues Paul had to deal with; we're dealing with those same problems today. It is mind-blowing.

Let's build upon this. I want to take you to Galatians 5:6—**For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but faith working through love.** I want you to understand something. Paul would have never made that statement if we were in a time released capsule. He would not have made that statement if sometime later in our faith, as we develop and grow in the Torah, the expectation is we would be circumcised. He would have had to say instead, "No, it does matter. The bottom line is you Gentiles need to do this." You can't make the statement Paul made in Galatians 5:6 and believe circumcision is required.

Let's go to the next chapter in Galatians 6:15—**For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation.** This is a really good example. This is the exact same statement as found in Galatians 5:6. This is how you get to know Paul. This is how your understanding expands regarding Paul's writings because he uses the same punchline but with different terminology. In Galatians 5:6, it is faith working through love; in Galatians 6:15, it is a new creation. Yes, they're the same thing, but my understanding broadened. I now know faith working through love is what it means to be a new creation.

I want you to understand the problem. The fact the Galatians were falling into the trap of believing unless they're circumcised they can't be saved wasn't a legitimate spiritual conviction; it was spiritual blindness. That's frightening because the devil has come and perverted the Torah. He is twisting the Torah, to his advantage, to destroy the Gospel. This is what Satan attempted to do to Yeshua when he fought Him in the wilderness. Satan used Scripture.

Think about that concept. It is as if someone just quotes the Torah, and we fall over and go, "Oh, that's a perfect truth" without having the spiritual understanding. It's really scary.

I want to take another passage from Paul that is probably one of the most concise passages you could find on this topic. Paul leaves no wiggle room. We find it in 1 Corinthians 7:18—**Was anyone called while circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Was anyone called while uncircumcised? Let him not be circumcised.** Could that be any clearer? We're talking about the state of men who are not

circumcised coming into the faith. What does Paul say? Paul says—**Let him not be circumcised**. Is that a time release capsule? No. It couldn't be clearer.

Paul goes on in the next verse in 1 Corinthians 7:19-20—¹⁹ **Circumcision is nothing** [same thing we just read twice in Galatians] **and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters.** ²⁰ **Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called.** So first Paul says it is faith working through love (Galatians 5:6). Then he says the same thing using different terminology in Galatians 6:15—**a new creation**. Now Paul ties it all together, what is faith working through love? What is a new creation? It is keeping the commandments of God. That is an anchor. Paul just threw out an anchor. Do I throw out the whole Torah because I'm not doing this one thing? Why don't I do it? Because God has pardoned the Gentiles, who are coming in according to the prophets, which, of course, we don't want to listen to.

Think about this. **Keeping the commandments of God is what matters**. So right here, Paul tells us Torah is not done away with. The expectation for these Gentiles is they're supposed to keep the commands of Torah. But the problem people struggle with today is their understanding that they can't keep Torah unless they are circumcised because that is one of the commandments. Again, open your understanding, your ears, and your heart to what was said in the New Testament by men who are anointed with the Ruach HaKodesh and who were given authority, not just in this age but in the age to come (Matthew 16:19).

It scares me when we start to turn a deaf ear to our brothers who paved the way of the Gospel in the New Testament era, and we attempt to understand the Torah apart from that knowledge. That is not going to happen. You're going to be completely devoid of understanding. In case you missed it, I will give it to you again—²⁰ **Let each one remain in the same calling in which he was called (1 Corinthians 7:20)**. This is not a time-release capsule situation.

This is what it means in Ephesians 2 for the Jew, the circumcised, and the Gentile, the uncircumcised, and for the middle wall to be broken down where they become one new man. There is none of that at all if all the Gentiles are going to be is a proselyte. If Gentiles have to physically get circumcised in the flesh, then there is no Jew or Gentile. It is just proselytes. We're not thinking through this. Instead of saying, "Foolish Galatians," we should say, "Oh foolish generation."

Now, having said all of that, you need to make a distinction. The timetable being discussed in all these verses is that of a Gentile who is being called into the faith while uncircumcised. It is not saying the Gentiles who have children who are born into the faith shouldn't circumcise their children. A Gentile who has been born into the faith knows the truth, the Torah, and he will absolutely circumcise his children. He won't do it on the third day or the fifth day. He will do it exactly as prescribed in the Torah which is on the eighth day. That distinction has to be drawn here.

I want to close today with the question I always get when I'm dealing with this topic. What about Timothy? I have actually had people look at the passage about Timothy and then literally reject everything we went through because they saw the Apostle Paul circumcise Timothy. It is really mind-blowing.

Let's look at Timothy. Acts 16:1-3—¹ **Then he came to Derbe and Lystra. And behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a certain Jewish woman who believed, but his father was Greek**

(emphasis added). This is a critical aspect. Timothy's mother was Jewish. ² He was well spoken of by the brethren who were at Lystra and Iconium. ³ Paul wanted to have him go on with him. And he took him and circumcised him.

Now remember Timothy is Jewish; he comes from Jewish descent. He is well known among the brethren. This means he is known among the Jewish people. Timothy is no slouch. He had an early fame, if you will, in the faith. The Jews knew who he was, and they knew his mother was Jewish, and they knew his father was a Greek.

Why did Paul do this? First, Timothy is Jewish, but we're actually given the ultimate answer in the very next statement—because of the Jews who were in that region, for they all knew that his father was Greek (Acts 16:3). The Jews who were in that region knew his mother was Jewish and would have seen Timothy as a Jew who has absolutely forsaken the faith, forsaken the Torah, and forsaken the people.

Now I want you to think about this whole scenario. Paul is literally sitting with the document from the Jerusalem Council in his hand (Acts 15:23) regarding the Gentiles. It was the council's decision stating Gentiles, who are coming to the faith do not have to be circumcised to be saved. Paul has this document, and as he is going on his way. He comes to Timothy and circumcises him because he's Jewish and because he's going to take him with him into ministry. Paul knows the Jewish people know who Timothy is, and guess what? Paul and Timothy are going to go together into the synagogues.

You are not going to understand this if you have not been to Israel. Paul and Timothy are going into these orthodox sections. They knew who Paul was. Paul was the most controversial character of his day. His own people, the Jewish people, were making stuff up about him. In fact, we actually read this in Acts 21:21—but they have been informed about you that you teach all the Jews who are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children nor to walk according to the customs.

The Word was already going out, and what was being done to prevent the devil from getting even a sliver or a crack of opportunity to destroy the testimony Paul possessed? Keep in mind Paul went out to the Jew first, and then he went to the Greek. Paul and Timothy were going into the synagogues. They knew Timothy was a Jew, but he was not circumcised. That can't happen unless you want to give the devil room to destroy the gospel.

If Timothy, who is a known Jew, but his father was a Greek, rejected the Torah, bringing him with you would destroy your credibility. It makes perfect sense. That's why when we look at this, he specifically says— because of the Jews who were in that region (Acts 16:3).