

Sons of God by means of “The Faith”

Ponder: The difference between faith and “the faith”

Scripture: “For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith” (Galatians 3:26, ESV).

Who did God plan to include in the kingdom of Christ? Not only Jews, but Gentiles!

What status do both Jews and Gentiles enjoy in Christ? They are not just children (minors), but sons (adults)!

Now let’s look at the next question: How? How does one come to be included in the kingdom with this exalted status? The Judaizers in Galatia would have said, “By means of the law of Moses.” Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, disagrees. It is not by the law, he says, but by the faith.

Unfortunately, our English versions uniformly disregard the definite article (“the”), reading “faith” rather than “the faith.” The two are not the same! Our own personal faith (confident, trusting obedience) is essential, no doubt. But Paul writes of “the faith” in contrast to “the law.” “The faith” is not a reference to one’s own personal trust in Jesus; rather, it refers to the system of faith also known as “the gospel.” Acts 6:7 speaks of people being “obedient to the faith.” This is the practical equivalent of saying “obeyed the gospel” (compare 1 Peter 4:7).

The Galatians’ status as sons (not just children) of God, then, came not as a result of law-keeping, but through “the faith,” the gospel of Christ. When Paul had evangelized in that region, he taught them the gospel, not the law.

How thankful we should be that God has graciously made us His sons by means of the gospel! By the way, even though “sons” is a male term, the status applies to ladies also (see Galatians 3:28 “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”).

Some even today are still confused about the law and the gospel. Others feel compelled to follow some other path than what the New Testament teaches. Please know that modifying the gospel in any way, or trading it for any other system, is a bad bargain. Treasure your status as a son of God! And remember, that exalted position comes only through the gospel.

Song: “Only In Thee”

Prayer: Heavenly Father, we thank You for the blessed gospel through which we can become Your sons. Help us to cherish that status and never surrender it. In Jesus’ name, Amen.