

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL



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SCRIPTURE

GALATIANS 3:15-22

15 Brothers and sisters, I give an example from daily life: once a person's will has been ratified, no one adds to it or annuls it. 16 Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring; it does not say, "And to offsprings," as of many; but it says, "And to your offspring," that is, to one person, who is Christ. 17 My point is this: the law, which came four hundred thirty years later, does not annul a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise. 18 For if the inheritance comes from the law, it no longer comes from the promise; but God granted it to Abraham through the promise.

19 Why then the law? It was added because of transgressions, until the offspring would come to whom the promise had been made; and it was ordained through angels by a mediator. 20 Now a mediator involves more than one party; but God is one.

21 Is the law then opposed to the promises of God? Certainly not! For if a law had been given that could make alive, then righteousness would indeed come through the law. 22 But the scripture has imprisoned all things under the power of sin, so that what was promised through faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

DEVOTIONAL

The Rev. C. Mark Scott, retired pastor and hospice chaplain, having served in Florida, North Carolina, and Tennessee / Inverness, Fla. / Parish Ministry Focus

The right word often escapes me! I can think of a similar word, but it is not the word I really want to say because it is not precise. I stir around in my mental files and I ask my wife. The exact word comes to my rescue!

We are having a fence installed around our backyard so we won't have to worry about Rio, our dog, wandering loose. We told the fence-installer that we had ordered "quikrete" online and asked him if we should do the same with the fencing. But he felt better about going to the store personally and picking it out so that if any mistake was made, it would be his.

Specificity is so important. With the Galatians Paul gets specific. A will says exactly what it means, he reminds them. The inheritance is to Abraham and to his "descendant" (not descendants). The Law was added "430 years" after the Promise of inheritance, so the Promise holds precedence over the Law.

Advent is a time, I think, to be specific about our faith: Who exactly is this One to Whom Mary gives birth? Why is He born in such a way? Why to these parents? Why was Jesus born when He was? This Advent season, make specificity your spiritual discipline.

PRAYER

Lord of Advent, Your coming into the world changed everything! Help us to focus on what the Scriptures tell us about who You are. Help us to continue to learn about our salvation and grow in the love and knowledge of Jesus Christ. To You be all Glory!

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