

BOOK OF GALATIANS
OUR ADOPTION AS SONS
GALATIANS 4:1-7; ROMANS 8:14-17

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Introduction

This morning we continue our journey through the book of Galatians. We've had a few interruptions lately with my vacation, a couple of missionary speakers, and last week's message regarding what the Bible says about government and how it relates to the upcoming election, but this morning we get back on track.

READ BOTH OF THE TEXTS!

Among the many Spiritual Blessings that we who are Believers in Christ have been blessed with is found here in *verse 5*—we have received the **ADOPTION OF SONS!**

Paul also mentions this present aspect of our **ADOPTION** in:
Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

ADOPTION has a dual meaning—There is a present aspect of our ADOPTION and there is a future aspect.

I want you to cast aside what you know about **ADOPTION** from our day! That is **NOT** what this is talking about! (*e.g. Our nephew Dustin and his wife Denise adopted their three children Dallas, Daniel, and Delaney and that is how they got into our family but that is not the ADOPTION this speaks of!*)

We do not get into God's family by ADOPTION . We get into His family by REGENERATION...i.e. THE NEW BIRTH or BEING BORN AGAIN! (Cf. John 3:1-18; 1 Peter 1:22-25)

John 3:3 Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

1 Peter 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 Peter 1:23 Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.

So if our text is NOT speaking about ADOPTION as we know it, what is it speaking about? The New Testament word for **ADOPTION** means "*to place as an adult son.*" It has to do with our **standing** in the family of God! In our standing we are **NOT** little children but rather **we are adult sons with all of the privileges of sonship!**

So, ADOPTION is the act of God by which God gives those of us who have been born into His Family adult standing in His Family!

Well, the next question that comes to mind is—**WHY does He do this?** **So that we might immediately begin to claim and enjoy our inheritance and enjoy the wealth of our Spiritual Blessings in Christ!**

A baby cannot legally use his inheritance (Galatians 4:1-2), but an adult son can (Galatians 4:7)—and should!

So what does this mean for those of us who are Believers? It means that we do not have to wait until we are an old saint before we can **claim the riches we have in Christ! We don't have to wait until our maturity!**

Now understand that there is also a **future aspect of our ADOPTION** that Paul speaks of in **Romans 8:23** that we DO have to wait for, and that has to do with the glorified body that we will obtain when Jesus returns!
Romans 8:23 ...but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

We are the children of God by faith in Christ, born into God's family. (Galatians 3:26) But EVERY child of God is automatically placed into the family as a son (an ADULT son), and as an adult son he has all the legal rights and privileges of an ADULT son!

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When a sinner trusts Christ and is saved, as far as his **CONDITION** is concerned, **he is a "spiritual babe" who needs to grow !;**
1 Peter 2:2 As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

BUT, as far as his **POSITION** is concerned, **he is an adult son who can draw on the Father's wealth and who can exercise all the wonderful privileges of Sonship!**

So here is the bottom line, we **ENTER** God's family by **REGENERATION**, but we **ENJOY** God's family by **ADOPTION!**

The Believer does not have to wait to begin enjoying the spiritual riches he has in Christ!

Galatians 4:7 If a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

Romans 8:17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ...

Now, let's see how Paul illustrates this truth!

I. THE POSITION OF A CHILD—THEY WERE UNDER A SERVANT UNTIL ADULTHOOD! (Vs 1-3)

In the Roman world of that day, no matter how wealthy a father may be, his infant son or toddling child could not really enjoy that wealth.

In fact the children of wealthy people were cared for by slaves. No matter who his father was, the child was still a child, under the supervision of a servant.

In fact, the child himself was not much different from the servant who guarded him. The servant was commanded by the master of the house, and the child was commanded by the servant.

This was the spiritual condition of the Jews under the Dispensation or age of the Law.

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The Law, was the "*guardian*" so to speak, the "*pedagogue*" or "*schoolmaster*", that disciplined the nation and prepared the people for the coming of Christ (*Galatians 3:23-25*).

So, when the Judaizers led the Galatians back into the legalism of the Law, **they were leading them not only back into religious bondage, but also into moral and spiritual infancy and immaturity.**

Paul states that the Jews were, like little children, in bondage under "*the elements of the world.*" (*4:3*) That word "*elements*" means *the basic principles*, the ABCs if you will.

For some fifteen centuries, **Israel had been in kindergarten and grade school, learning their "spiritual ABCs,"** so that they would be ready when Christ would come.

Then they would get the full revelation, because Jesus Christ is "*the Alpha and the Omega.*" (*Revelation. 22:13*) He encompasses all the alphabet of God's revelation to man! He is God's last Word!

(Hebrews 1:1-3)

So, **legalism or going back under the Law, was not and is not a step toward maturity! Rather, it is a step back into childhood!** The Law was not God's final revelation! The Law was only the preparation for that final revelation that came in Christ!

It is important that a person know his ABCs, because they are the foundation for understanding all of the language. But the man who sits in a library and recites the ABCs instead of reading the great literature that is around him, is showing that he is immature and ignorant, not mature and wise.

Under the Law, the Jews were children in bondage, not sons enjoying liberty.

II. **WHAT GOD DID IN CHRIST—HE REDEEMED THEM THAT WERE UNDER THE LAW! (Vs. 4-5)**

The expression "*the fullness of the time*" there in *verse 4* refers to that time when the world was providentially ready for the birth of the Saviour.

Historians tell us that those living in the Roman world were in great expectation, waiting for a Deliverer, at the time when Jesus was born.

There had not been a prophet of God since Malachi! God had been silent for some 435 years! Religious bankruptcy and spiritual hunger were everywhere!

From the historical point of view, the Roman Empire itself helped prepare the world for the birth of the Saviour. Roads connected city with city, and all cities ultimately with Rome.

Roman laws protected the rights of citizens, and Roman soldiers guarded the peace. Thanks to both the Greek and Roman conquests, Latin and Greek were known across the empire.

Christ's birth at Bethlehem happened when God was ready for it to happen! It was a Divine appointment: Jesus came in "*the fullness of the time.*"

(And listen, as a side note, Jesus will come again when the time is ready! And this world is being prepared for His second coming!)

Paul was careful to point out the dual nature of Jesus Christ there in *Galatians 4:4*—That He is both God and man!

God sent forth His Son — There is Christ's Divinity!

John 16:28 I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father.

Made of a woman — There is Christ's Humanity!

The very first prophecy of Christ said that the Redeemer would be of the woman's seed!

*Genesis 3:15 And I will put enmity between thee and **the woman**, and between thy seed **and her seed**; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

The prophet Isaiah further prophesied:

Isaiah 7:14 Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Matthew's Gospel records that Jesus Christ fulfilled Isaiah's Prophecy! **(Matthew 1:18-25)**

Paul told us Who came—God's Son!

Paul told us when He came and how He came.

In *verse 5*, Paul explains why Christ came: "*to redeem them that were under the Law*". *Redeem* is the same word Paul used earlier in Galatians 3:13! It means "*to set free by paying a price.*"

A man could purchase a slave in any Roman city (there were about 60 million slaves in the empire)! He could purchase a slave to either keep the slave for himself or to set him free.

Jesus came to set us free! So, to go back under the Law as many were doing was to not take advantage of the very work of Christ on the cross.

He did not purchase us to make us slaves, but sons! Under Law, the Jews were mere children, but under grace, **the Believer is a son of God with an adult standing in God's family!**

THE POSITION OF A CHILD—UNDER A SERVANT UNTIL ADULTHOOD!

WHAT GOD DID IN CHRIST—HE REDEEMED THEM THAT WERE UNDER THE LAW!

III. WHAT WE ARE IN CHRIST—WE ARE ADULT SONS AND HEIRS! (Vs 6-7)

We see the entire Trinity involved in our Spiritual experience!
God the Father sent the Son to die for us, and God the Son sent His Spirit to live in us.

The contrast here is not really between immature children and adult sons, but between servants and sons!

A. **The Son Has The Same Nature As The Father, But The Servant Does Not!**

When we trust Christ, the Holy Spirit comes to live within us; and this means we are "*partakers of the divine nature*" (2 Peter 1:4).

The Law could never give a person God's nature within!
All it could do was reveal to the person his desperate need for God's nature.

So, when a Believer goes back under the Law, he is denying the very Divine nature within, and he is giving the old nature (the flesh) opportunity to go to work!

B. **The Son Has A Father, While The Servant Has A Master!**

No servant could ever say "*Father*" to his master.
When the sinner trusts Christ, he receives the Holy Spirit within, and the Spirit tells him that he is a child of the Father!

Romans 8:15-16 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

It is natural for a baby to cry, but not for a baby to talk to his father. But, when the Spirit of God enters the heart, He causes us to say, "*Abba, Father*" (Galatians 4:6; Romans 8:15).

The word "*Abba*" is an Aramaic word that is the equivalent of our English word "*papa*." This shows the closeness of the child to the Father.

No servant has this! A servant only has fear!
The son obeys out of love, while the servant obeys out of fear.

The Spirit works in the heart of the believer to quicken and increase his love for God.

Galatians 5:22 "The fruit of the Spirit is love..."

Romans 5:5 "...The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us"

The Judaizers fooled the Galatians into believing that they would become better Christians by submitting to the Law, **but the Law can never produce obedience. Only love can do that.** "*If ye love Me, keep My commandments*" (John 14:15).

The son is rich, while the servant is poor. Believers are both "*sons and heirs*." And since we are adopted—placed as adult sons in the family—we may begin drawing on our inheritance right now.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

The son has a future, while the servant does not.

While many kind masters did provide for their slaves in old age, it was not required of them. The father always provides for the son! I'm glad our Heavenly Father provides for us!

Conclusion

Are you a child of God? Have you been born again into His Family? It is the only way to get in! And if you are in His Family, you are an heir and joint-heir of all that belongs to Jesus! Amen!