

Galatians 4:1-4:20

Embracing Adoption

Image Church // Galatians: Week 5

Introduction

Good morning Image Family....

I want to wish all of our moms a **Happy Mother's Day!**

- *If you're a mom, would you do me a favor and just stand for a minute? We want to celebrate you!*

Today is a day where we honor the role that you've been given, it is a special role, and you didn't earned, it's a role that's been given to you by God to steward for His glory...

Your job is not easy, and it's one that never ends... It's a job that you can often get lost in, where you can feel overwhelmed...

- I know It can be tiring, but I don't want you to lose sight of the fact that every day, you're sowing into little lives, helping craft them into who they're going to be...
- We see you and we thank you!

Today, I want you to feel the blessing of your calling and also be reminded of what it entails...

- Your calling to show and shape your kids' hearts around the love of Christ to your kids...
- And remember, you're replaceable everywhere else, but you're not replaceable as a mom!
- And know that we stand with you, partnering together to see your kids come to know and love Jesus!

I also want to recognize another type of mother here today, and that's those that have stepped in as caregivers through foster care, or those that have stepped in as spiritual mothers in the lives of others... You play a huge role for the kingdom in your intentionality and your love!

And lastly, I want to say this, I know for some of you, Mother's Day is very hard because of death, or infertility, or maybe you were hurt by your mom... I want to spend some time praying for you as well...

- This is why it's so important to understand the church as a family... We want you to be seen and loved!

PRAY...

****Coffee and Conversations Next Weekend:** *Craft night...*

Alright, if you have your Bible, turn to Galatians 4...

Build the tension: Royal Wedding...

- *Heir... 5 deep*

Chapter 4

1 Now I say that as long as the heir is a child, he differs in no way from a slave, though he is the owner of everything. **2** Instead, he is under guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. **3** In the same way we also, when we were children, were in slavery under the elements of the world.

Paul's been making the case that the law plays **no part** in our salvation...

- And he's writing this letter because there's a group of people, the **Judiazers** who were saying otherwise. That the law did in fact, play a part in your salvation...

So Paul walked through the purpose of the law: that the law is not the means of salvation; ***it's the thing that shows you that you need to be saved!***

What saves is ***faith in the finished work of Jesus (Galatians 3:26)***...

- And then he goes on to explain how when you have faith in the finished work of Jesus, you become a child of God...
- And as a child of God, you're an **heir according to God's promise (Galatians 3:29)**...
 - The **promise** that Paul's referring to is God's promise to Abraham, that he received through faith...
 - Where God promises his **presence, His blessing, and His plan for redemption**...
 - And Paul's saying that you get this through faith in Jesus!

Contextually, this is important because the **Judaizers** were teaching that access to God's promise came, in essence, becoming Jewish by conforming to the Jewish law...

- The miss is that they *assumed* God's promise was about **a people group** and not about **a person**... JESUS!
- God chose Israel to be a means by which He would reveal Himself... This would happen through the law at first, but this law would point to the ultimate way God would reveal Himself, which is through Jesus...

So, what Paul's does here at the beginning of chapter 4 is brings together what he's been saying with an analogy to show the incredible implications of God's promise that we have access to through faith in Jesus!

In this analogy, Paul talks about a child and a slave...

He says: in the early days of the child's life, there's no difference between the child and the slave...

- In Roman culture, *guardians* cared for children, but they kept the children away from dealing with the father when it came to managing the estate.
- A child is under *guardians* just like a slave...

IOW: The child's **access** and **status** doesn't change until the child has come of age at the appointed time of the father...

And when that comes, the father takes what had been promised and gives it to his son...

- The son didn't earn it, the son didn't work for it- it's not a wage, it's not based on performance, it's an inheritance...
- The son is just a recipient of what was promised!
- And in that moment, when the son receives the promise, his status and access change...
 - ***He's come into his full right as a son, given his complete inheritance and the freedom to use it...***¹

Here's the point:

- We were slaves to sin- it was our master...
- But when we believe the gospel, *we become of age*...
 - **BTW:** this is why it's biblically impossible to say that you've always been a Christian...
- And in the same way that a child's inheritance is based solely on the promise of the father, not being something that's **earned** but something that's **received**...
- We too receive an inheritance based only on the promise of the Father, it's not something that we earn, it's something that we receive through faith...

And **not only** does our inheritance promise us something in the future, it gives us something the moment that we receive it...

- **IOW:** you don't have to wait to tap in to your inheritance- you can access it right now!!
- That the minute you believe in the finished work of Jesus, your **status** before God and your **access** to God changes...
- This is what Paul want's us to see...

This is what Paul's about to flesh out, look at verse 4:

¹ Thoughts in this section credited to Tim Keller, *Children of God*

4 When the time came to completion, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, **5** to redeem those under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

At the appointed time, God sent His Son, **Jesus**, who became like one of us in order to accomplish what none of us ever could...

- Born under the law...
 - Jesus had the same obligation that we all did, but He fulfills the law perfectly...
- To redeem us, to bring us back to God...
- And He would do it by going to the cross... Dying in our place...
- And then He would raise from the dead...

So that we might receive adoption...

- Receive!
- **Adoption**... A change in family and status...

*Pastoral appeal here... **Here's what we do:** look for this is wrong places...*

- What we don't need is a better lover or more things, what we need is to be adopted...
- What we don't need is a better career or more money, what we need is to be adopted...
- The reality is that we go after things in this life hoping that it will give us that we ultimately want, and what we ultimately need, but it can't!

Illustration: Adalyn... Daddy look at me... (it ain't great)

- Daddy, me too... (but it's not you too)
- Why does she do it? She does it because she wants the love and approval of her daddy...
- What she doesn't get yet is that she doesn't need to do any of that to get my love and approval...
- I love and approve of her because she's mine...

The same is true for us... So often, we're working so hard to get approval in all the wrong ways... And we're looking for it in all the wrong places...

- Would you see the love and approval of God?!?!?

Down deep, what we need is to see the approval of our heavenly father...

- Stop working to prove ourselves...
- Stop working for a status...

What we want and need is the love of our father... But we're looking for it in all the wrong places!

- For some of you, seeing God as your father is hard...
 - *Appeal...*

Not only are you set free from the power of sin, but you also have a **new identity!**

- You are not what you have done...
- You are not what's been done to you...
- You are not what people say you are...
- You are not what you do...

You are none of those things... You are who God says you are...

- And you no longer walk in bondage to sin, you now walk in power...
- You no longer walk in light of the approval of others
- You walk in the power of who God's made you to be...
- You are His!!

And watch this, **verse 6:**

6 because you are sons, God sent the **Spirit** of his Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba, Father!" **7** So you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then God has made you an heir.

We are all sons. Paul used the same language a few verses earlier (Gal. 3:26). Remember I told you why this is an important distinction... It's not to knock the ladies—actually, the opposite!

- In ancient cultures, daughters could not inherit property. “**Son**” meant “**legal heir**,” and that was a status forbidden to women.
- Paul's driving home the fact that through faith in the gospel, we're all heirs in Christ...

As **sons**, we receive the power of the **Holy Spirit**... The same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead, is now in us!

- When you believe in the finished work of Jesus, you receive the Holy Spirit!
- It's the Spirit that unites us with Christ... How we receive the work of Jesus!
- It's the Spirit that changes our status and access...
- **It's the Spirit that sets you free**...
- Giving you a new heart, taking you from slave to sin to son or daughter of God!

*And check this out... This is so awesome to me... Paul says that the Spirit is crying out **Abba, Father**...

- **Abba:** Pappa or daddy...

Let me show you what Paul's pointing to in this. It's incredible!...

Through the Spirit, we get to experience not only **access to God** but **intimacy with God**...

- Fully known, fully loved...
- Nearness... God's not far off and distant, busy and distracted, He's near and close!
- Access into God's presence through prayer!

The Spirit guarantees that we will share in the the glory of Christ...

J.I.Packer, Knowing God: The doctrine of our adoption tells us that the sum and substance of our promised inheritance is a share in the glory of Christ. We shall be made like our elder brother [Jesus].²

- **Romans 8:17:** we are *Co-heirs with Christ...that we may also share in his glory*...
- **1 John 3:2** Now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him.

IOW: The way that God treats us is as if we've done everything that Jesus has done...

- **John 17:23** Jesus prays that the world would see that you loved them as you have loved me...

Paul uses the word *Abba*, here to drive this home... It's the same word that Jesus used when He talked to the Father in **Mark 14:36**.

- A theologian says it like this, *We can approach God as if we were as beautiful, heroic, and faithful as Jesus himself*.³

Illustration: Meeting Jeff Foxworthy...

- *My friend Darren changed how I interacted with Jeff...*

Verse 8:

8 But in the past, since you didn't know God, you were enslaved to things that by nature are not gods. **9** But now, since you know God, or rather have become known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and worthless elements? Do you want to be enslaved to them all over again?¹⁰ You are observing special days, months, seasons, and years.¹¹ I am fearful for you, that perhaps my labor for you has been wasted.

In other words, God's done a work in you through Christ and He has given you everything you need to walk in new life.

² J.I.Packer, Knowing God, chap 19 via Keller

³ Thoughts in this section credited to Tim Keller, *Children of God*.

Why would you turn back to the **former** things that were only designed to point to what you already have access to?!?

- **IOW:** they were participating in all of the festivals and ceremonies from the OT...

Appeal...

- Can be so like us to drift back into a legalistic mentality...

Verse 12: *Paul's going to make his appeal on a personal level...*

¹² I beg you, brothers and sisters: Become as I am, for I also have become as you are. You have not wronged me; ¹³ you know that previously I preached the gospel to you because of a weakness of the flesh.

What Paul's saying is that he wants them to become like him giving up on the law as a means of salvation...

Something else powerful to see here...

- It seems that Paul ended up in the religion of Galatia initially because of some sort of ailment that he had...
- **IOW:** God used a detour and a delay...
 - *Appeal...*

Verse 14: *Paul goes even more personal here...*

¹⁴ You did not despise or reject me though my physical condition was a trial for you. On the contrary, you received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus himself. ¹⁵ Where, then, is your blessing? For I testify to you that, if possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶ So then, have I become your enemy because I told you the truth?

He's saying you received me with open arms, you welcomed me in... You would have done anything to help me...

- And yet now do you really consider me an enemy because I'm telling you the truth?!?

Appeal: *People don't always like truth... Truth and love. Not just love, but also truth. Specifically when it comes to professing Christians.*

Verse 17:

¹⁷ They court you eagerly, but not for good. They want to exclude you from me, so that you would pursue them. ¹⁸ But it is always good to be pursued in a good manner—and not just when I am with you. ¹⁹ My children, I am again suffering labor pains for you until Christ is formed in you. ²⁰ I would like to be with you right now and change my tone of voice, because I don't know what to do about you.

What we see here is **Paul had come to win them to a Person; they [The Judaizers] had come to join them to a group of people.**

Challenge: Our salvation is not joining a specific culture, set of personal preferences, or by specific works...

Paul wants them to remember their **adoption**...

- Where do you need to remember your adoption?

Francis Lyall: *The profound truth of Roman adoption was that the adoptee was taken out of his previous state and placed in a new relationship of son to his new father...All his old debts are cancelled, and in effect the adoptee started a new life as part of his new family.*⁴

Conclusion [VAMP]

Appeal for baptism...

- Indicator and a reminder of your adoption...

Pray

⁴ Francis Lyall, *Slaves, Citizens, and Sons*