

**Galatians: *Be a Bear, not a
Horseshoe Crab!***
Part Three – Galatians 4:1-31
“Secure in the Family”
November 12, 2023

Vv 1,2 Referring to current Roman culture, the child, though an heir, lived the life of the servant until adulthood, his care and decisions and financial future being entrusted to guardians and managers until his formal “adoption” into the family as a full-fledged son and adult.

Vv 3-5 Likewise, the Jew under the OT Law was held in bondage by the “elemental things”, those being, in this context, the rudimentary patterns of human worship of deity (or Deity): sacrifices and temples and lists dictating behavior and a “something for something” relationship to secure the good graces of the deity being worshipped. It was from this pattern of worship that Jesus Christ has delivered us and that God has actually adopted us as sons.

Vv 6-7 By virtue of our adoption, God has even given us His Spirit living within us, by whom we are in position to address Him as “Dad.” This relationship is no longer in legal terms, it is now in familial terms. “Abba” also occurs in Romans 8:15 and Mark 14:36.

Implications of baptism into Christ, giving of the Spirit, and adoption as sons:

- You are secure in your destiny.
- You are secure in God’s family.
- God cannot love you more than He already does (no matter how much you do for Him).

- God cannot love you less than He loves His Son (no matter how little you do for Him).
- God now relates to you as a Father to a child.

Vv 8-11 The Galatian believers were at risk of returning to their old pattern of pagan worship, the elemental things described above, if they put themselves under the Law of Moses. See Acts Ch 14.

Vv 11-20 The Galatian believers were at risk of not growing to maturity in Christ if they went under law to consider themselves acceptable to God. “Christ...formed in you” carries the idea of the embryo developing into a baby inside the womb. See Col 1:28,29 – Paul labored to “present every man complete in Christ,” i.e., spiritual maturity.

4:21-5:1

Hagar

Bondwoman

Ishmael born – flesh

Mt. Sinai = Jerusalem

Law → slaves

Persecuted child of promise

Sarah

Free woman

Isaac born – promise

Jerusalem from above

Children are free

Galatians 4:30 But what does the Scripture say?

“CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN AND HER SON,
FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE
AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN.”

Law and Promise, legalism and grace, are not compatible. The Christian life is a life free from law, and free from license, as well, as we shall see in Ch 5.

This four-part Galatians study is in our series of the epistles of the Apostle Paul, entitled *Letters that Changed the World - Making my life a letter that changes the world.*