

Christians on Campus
Fall 2020 Bible Study
The Heart of the Bible
Galatians (4)

Galatians 4

¹But I say, As long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave, though he is lord of all; ²but he is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. ³So also we, when we were children, were kept in slavery under the elements of the world; ⁴but when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵that He might redeem those under law that we might receive the sonship. ⁶And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father! ⁷So then you are no longer a slave but a son; and if a son, an heir also through God.

⁸However at that time, not knowing God, you were slaves to the gods which by nature are not gods; ⁹but now, having come to know God, or rather having been known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and poor elements, to which you desire to be enslaved yet again? ¹⁰You observe days and months and seasons and years; ¹¹I fear for you, lest I have labored upon you in vain. ¹²Become as I am, because I also am as you are, brothers, I beseech you; you have not wronged me at all. ¹³And you know that because of weakness of my flesh I announced the gospel to you the first time. ¹⁴And that which was a trial to you in my flesh you did not despise nor loathe, but you received me as an angel of God, indeed as Christ Jesus. ¹⁵Where then is your felicitation? For I testify concerning you that if possible you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me. ¹⁶So then have I become your enemy by presenting the truth to you? ¹⁷They are zealous of you, but not rightly; but they desire to shut you out that you may be zealous of them. ¹⁸But it is always good to be zealous in a good thing, and not only when I am present with you. ¹⁹My children, with whom I travail again in birth until Christ is formed in you, ²⁰indeed, I wish I could be present with you now and change my tone because I am perplexed about you.

²¹Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law? ²²For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one of the maidservant and one of the free woman. ²³However the one of the maidservant was born according to the flesh, but the one of the free woman was born through promise. ²⁴These things are spoken allegorically, for these women are two covenants, one from Mount Sinai, bringing forth children unto slavery, which is Hagar. ²⁵Now this Hagar is Sinai the mountain in Arabia and corresponds to the Jerusalem which now is, for she is in slavery with her children. ²⁶But the Jerusalem above is free, which is our mother; ²⁷for it is written, "Rejoice, barren one who does not bear; break forth and shout, you who are not travailing, because many are the children of her who is desolate rather than of her who has her husband." ²⁸But you, brothers, in the way Isaac was, are children of promise. ²⁹But just as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, so also it is now. ³⁰But what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the maidservant and her son, for the son of the maidservant shall by no means inherit with the son of the free woman." ³¹So then, brothers, we are not children of the maidservant but of the free woman.

Discussion questions:

1. Paul continues his example of Abraham in this chapter in verses 21-31. Fill out this table to find the contrast between the old and new covenant.

	Old covenant	New covenant
Who represents which covenant (4:22, 24; cf. Genesis 16)?		
What location represents which covenant (4:24-26)?		
Based on the covenant we are under, of whom are we children (4:24, 26, 31)?		
What kind of children are produced by the two women (4:24, 28-29)?		

2. What does it mean to be born according to the flesh? What does it mean to be born according to the Spirit? How does this relate to our inheriting God's promises?
3. "Christ's being formed in us is needed that we may be sons of full age and heirs to inherit God's promised blessing, and that we may mature in the divine sonship". Consider this statement, and try to prove it by using verses from this chapter.