

The Book of Galatians
Lesson 7 - Galatians 3:26-4:11
Gospel Living
“The Rights of a Son”

Anyone who reads the Word carefully must admit that at different times, God deals in different ways with different people. In this section, Paul explains that the period of Law was a dispensation, a special way in which God dealt with Israel for a special purpose. God never gave the Mosaic law to the Gentiles. To impose Jewish regulations on Gentiles (or even on Jews today) is totally unscriptural.

The Jews were heirs, for God had made wonderful promises to them through Abraham, but it took many centuries before they received these promises. The child, Paul reasons, might be heir to a fortune, but so long as he or she has not reached the legal age of inheritance, the child is no different from the slave. Even so, the Jews were in their “spiritual childhood” under the law. The rules and rituals of the Law were the “religious ABCs” they had to learn before they could graduate into their full inheritance. This legalism was bondage to the Mosaic system. But this order of law ran its course, having prepared the way for Christ. Christ was born at the right time, in the right manner, and for the right purpose (to set us free). Christ was made under the Law, obeyed the Law, and fulfilled the Law in His life and death. His death on the cross set the Jews free from their legalistic bondage and opened the way for the fulfillment of the promises to Abraham.

Had Israel received its Messiah when Peter presented Him at Pentecost, the nation would have entered into its adulthood. The blessing would have flowed out to the Gentiles through Israel, and the Abrahamic promises would have been fulfilled. The nation collectively rejected Christ, but God in His grace opened the blessings up to Jews and Gentiles alike on an individual basis. The Gentiles were not saved through Israel’s rise, but through Israel’s fall. Now, individual Jews have received their adoption as mature, grown-up children in God’s family. They are no longer little children under the guidance of tutors; believers are sons, not servants, enjoying the full inheritance in Christ.

Read Galatians 3:26-3:29 and answer the following questions

1. In verse 3:26, Paul says, “You are the sons of God.” Does this mean that everyone is a child of God? (Rom. 8:13-17, John 8:44)
2. What rights, privileges, and responsibilities do we have as earthly sons and daughters? How do these correspond with the rights, privileges, and responsibilities we have as children of God?
3. How can “*Putting on Christ*” (vs. 27) help us to break down cultural barriers?
4. What place do roles and distinctions have in Christian life, and what place do they not? (See Luke 20:34-36, 1 Cor. 7:17-24, Eph. 6:5-9, 1 Tim. 6:1-2, 1 Peter 2:13-17)

Read Galatians 4:1-11 and answer the following questions

5. In verses 1-7, Paul gives an analogy involving children, heirs, slaves, and sons. Describe this relationship in your own words?
6. Why do you think it was necessary for Christ to be born so completely entangled into the human situation? (See Gal. 4:4, 2 Cor. 5:12, Gal. 3:13)
7. As a believer, do you feel you have more or less rules and regulations you feel you have to follow than you did before Christ?

8. What is the Spirit's function in regards to sonship? (See Gal. 4:6-7, Rom. 8:15-17, Eph. 1:13-14)

9. What would be the difference between the Galatians original slavery to pagan gods (4:8) and their return to slavery (4:9)?

10. In verses 8-11, Paul asks the Galatians why they are turning back to their old ways. Do we ever do that today? How? Why?

11. What is the difference between "knowing God" and "being known by God" (4:9)?

12. The pagan gods had their "weak and beggarly elements" (4:9), as did Judaism. What kind of rules and regulations could a Christian today put himself or herself in bondage to?

Some Great Verses about Believers Sonship in God

“For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.” Rom. 8:14

*“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God”
Rom. 8:16*

“And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, Abba, Father!” Gal. 4:16

“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.” Gal. 3:26

“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” John 1:12

“I will be a Father to you, and you shall be My sons and daughters, says the LORD Almighty.” 2 Cor. 6:18

“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. Beloved, now we are children of God; and it has not yet been revealed what we shall be, but we know that when He is revealed, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.” 1 John 3:1-2

“He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be my son.” Rev. 21:7