

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MARCH 17TH, 2024 // GALATIANS

ADOPTED (GALATIANS 3:27-4:7) CLOTHED WITH CHRIST

Verse 27 may be talking about water baptism and the symbols it declares, but it clearly shares that Paul is talking to people who are following Christ, forgiven of their sins, and clothed with the righteousness of Christ.

- **Sometimes, we are distracted by a point that isn't the point at all.**

YOU ARE ALL ONE

Paul shares that Christ has broken barriers. Race, social status, and gender are not requirements for salvation. Christ accepts everyone who will come to Him.

- **As followers of Christ, we are "in Christ," and He is in us. We belong to Him and are now heirs, His children.**

CHILD OR SLAVE?

Paul compares living under the law to being a child who is an heir to a great fortune but too young to enjoy it. Although a slave wasn't an heir, their life was much like that young child's.

- **Keeping the law to impress God or people is a sign of spiritual immaturity.**

GOD SENT HIS SON

God fulfilled His promise through Jesus Christ for everyone who lived under the law. He was born a man, kept the law, and redeemed everyone who believed, even the Galatians.

- **Do we believe we aren't worthy and need to do more? Jesus redeemed us because He is worthy.**

BEYOND SLAVERY

God releases us from slavery, rescues us from our captivity to the law, and redeems us from its curse. He doesn't stop there. He adopts us into His family.

- Paul calls us "sons" because we are like the firstborn son in his culture: the heir to all the father owns.

THE SPIRIT OF HIS SON

Paul reminds the Galatians that God has sent His Spirit into their hearts. The Holy Spirit within them would constantly remind them that they are children of God.

- **Jesus came so we could BECOME children of God. His Spirit is in us so we can LIVE like children of God.**

REGRESSION (GALATIANS 4:8-20)

THE PAST

Before the Galatian Church knew Christ, they worshiped idols and were slaves to their own religions. But now, they know God and are known by God. They are not slaves but sons.

- **Why would they want to become slaves again, living their lives in fear?**

PAUL'S FEAR

They were going beyond circumcision and adding special days, months, seasons, and years. They were starting to make the law their god and return to slavery.

- **When good works become working to look good, we live in fear and serve a god we created.**

I BEG YOU, BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Paul shared the gospel with them and thought they were growing in the faith. They had loved him and cared for him when he was weak. But now he wonders if they really knew Christ.

- **God has sent people into our lives to tell us the truth. How have we responded?**

WHEN THE TRUTH IS TOLD

Paul pursued them with the truth, and they received it. They are rejecting it because it doesn't fit their new plan.

- **God's Word and His messengers often tell us things we don't want to hear. But, as God's children, we should rejoice because it isn't meant to harm us; it is for our good.**

LABOR PAINS

The Judaizers were trying to form themselves in the Galatians; Paul wanted Christ to be formed in them. He wanted to be there, in person.

- **Making disciples isn't always easy. People make mistakes. Are we committed to seeing Christ formed in us and the people around us?**

ALLEGORY (GALATIANS 4:21-31)

TELL ME...

Paul, somewhat sarcastically, says: "So, you want to be under the law? Well, do you have any idea what the law really says? Because if you did, you wouldn't try to live under the law."

- **Paul knew that the Old Testament was a testimony of the promise, and that promise has always been Jesus.**

HISTORY

Abraham had two sons, one by a slave woman and one by a free woman. They grew up in the same house but were different. One was conceived of the flesh, and the other was through God's intervention.

- **When we live like "God helps those who help themselves," we get problems.**

THE ALLEGORY

Hagar and Ishmael stand in contrast to Sarah and Isaac. They represent two entirely different approaches to religion: law vs. grace, flesh vs. Spirit, and self-reliance vs. divine dependence.

- **These approaches still exist today, and we must decide how we will live as each way presents its case.**

NOW, YOU TOO...

Paul reminds the Galatians that they are children of promise, born as a result of the Holy Spirit, children of a free woman. They are children of God.

- **Maybe we need to be reminded of the same things. Ultimately, faith in anything other than Christ is a faith that leads away from Christ.**

CHILDREN

- God chooses us to be His children.
- **Knowing our Father is exciting and makes us want to show our love.**
- **We show our love for Him by following Christ and allowing His Holy Spirit to work in us and through us as we live for His glory and our good.**

INFANTS

- We begin our journey as infants.
- **As God changes us, we should mature in our faith and depend more on Him.**
- **Spiritual immaturity is rampant in the Church because we believe that we can depend more on ourselves and our good works. It's time to grow up!**

FAITH

- Child-like faith is a mature faith.
- **We still need our Father. We still need forgiveness. We still need grace.**
- **The closer we get to Christ, the more we realize what He has done for us, and the more we will love and obey Him. Are we living to show off who we are (flesh) or do we live to share what we have (faith)?**