

Galatians 4

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- 1 ¶ Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, 2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. 4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!" 7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.**

- 1-2: What is the difference between an heir and a slave?
When the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave (v1)
he's under guardians and stewards (like a slave) until appointed by the father (v2)
- 3: How are Christians described?
As children... in bondage (enslaved) under the elements (gr: stoicheion - rank & conformity) of the world
- 4: At what point did 'the fullness of the time' occur?
When 'God sent forth His son, born (to come into being) of a woman, under (subject to) the law'
- 5: What happened to those who 'were under the law'?
They were redeemed (gr: ex+agorazo = from+purchase = also: ransomed = bought from bondage/slavery)
They received the adoption as sons – ie no longer slaves, but adopted into a family and considered an heir
- 6: What accompanies becoming a son?
The Spirit of His Son (which God sent forth), crying... "Abba Father"
IOW: His Spirit would remind us of 1) our adoption 2) our Father 3) our 'brother', Jesus
- 7: Because of the redemption, how are believers to regard themselves?
1) no longer a slave 2) a son 3) an heir (with joint custody and possession) through Christ

- 8 ¶ But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. 9 But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? 10 You observe days and months and seasons and years. 11 I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.**

- 8: Before they knew God, what was their way of life?
They served (were in bondage to) those which by nature are not gods (ie worldly order; leaders; demons)
- 9: Now that they know God (or are known by God), what is their way of life?
They're trying to find 'life' in the old elements (v3), which have no power to justify, instead of in redemption
Consequence: They're becoming 're-bound' trying to live up to these old 'elements'
NOTE: 'weak' = powerless; 'beggarly' = wanting, lacking, empty
- 10: What were some of the 'weak and beggarly elements' referenced in v9?
Observing days, months, seasons, and years
NOTE: 'Observe' implies "watching", instead of "listening" – by faith, not by sight (2Co 5:7)
This became a means of 'work' (apart from relationship) instead of 'resting' (ie abiding in J's work)
- 11: Why is Paul afraid for them?
Directly: That he labored for them in vain
Implied: That they were departing from Jesus (THE Way) to their own devices & way of justification

- 12 ¶ Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all. 13 You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. 14 And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. 15 What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me. 16 Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?**

- 12: What did Paul urge his brethren in Galatia to do?
Become like me! – IOW: Follow his example in casting off Jewish habits (as they did before his arrival!)
NOTE: "You have not injured me" – IOW: Adopting their non-Jewish habit didn't hurt Paul's 'justification'
- 13: Why did Paul come to the Galatians in the first place?
Evidently, due to an illness/physical infirmity (2Co 12:7 Thorn in the Flesh?)
- 14: Despite his illness, how did the Galatians receive Paul?
a) did not despise or reject b) as an angel (messenger) of God c) as Christ Jesus (as, of the same Spirit)
- 15: What was the blessing they enjoyed?
Serving Paul, to the fullest extent of self-sacrifice (they even would've given their eyes to him!)
NOTE: Perhaps an insight into Paul's 'Thorn': eye trouble (partial healing fr Ananias?); no walking by sight
- 16: What caused their relationship to change?
Paul told them the truth, and they 'become enemies' (resentful? no longer interested in serving him!)

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**17 ¶ They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them.
18 But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.**

17: What was Paul's insight regarding the motives of the Judaizers?

- 1) They zealously court you, but for no good – IOW: their 'gospel' (1:6-7) doesn't lead to life
- 2) They want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them – IOW: show lack, to get 'appreciation'
Ac 15:5a But some of the sect of the Pharisees who believed rose up, saying, "It is necessary..."
Gal 6:12 As many as desire to make a good showing in the flesh, these would compel you to be circumcised, only **that they may not suffer persecution** for the cross of Christ.

18: How does Paul regard zealousness?

- 1) It's good... to be zealous in a good thing... but the Judaizers' zeal was in a bad thing (works & self)
- 2) Paul is 'zealous' for the Galatians when he's with them AND away ("not only when I'm present with you")

**19 ¶ My little children, for whom I labor in birth again until Christ is formed in you,
20 I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.**

19: How does Paul regard the Galatians and their spiritual state?

- 1) His little children 2) Laboring (trevail/pain) in birth again(!) 3) Until Christ is formed in you
IOW: Paul was not convinced they were really Born Again in Christ – unsaved & unjustified

20: For what reason would Paul like to be present with them?

To have the opportunity to change his tone (ie crying out as a woman in childbirth)... due to his doubts

21 ¶ Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.

23 But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise,

24 which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar--

25 for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children--

26 but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

27 For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labor! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband."

28 Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

29 But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

30 Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

21: What is necessary for those who seek to be "under the law"?

To be a hearer of the law

22: Whose story does Paul reference from "the law (v21)"?

Abram, Sarai, & Isaac; Hagar & Ishmael – NOTE: "The Law" includes Genesis (Gen 16:3-16, 21:2)

23-26: What are the two covenants, and how are they symbolized?

- 1) Covenant of Bondage/Flesh/Mt Sinai (v24)

From a bondwoman, gave birth to a son (unnamed = Ishmael) also in bondage (v24)

A work of the flesh = Sarai's idea, Abram's agreement, Egyptian Hagar's conception (v23)

Mt Sinai in Arabia = the place of the Law, present Jerusalem (v25)

- 2) Covenant of Freedom/Promise/Jerusalem Above (v26)

From wife of freedom (Sarah), gave birth to free heir, Isaac

A work of the spirit/miracle/promise = God's idea & grace

Jerusalem Above = the place of The Spirit ("mother" of all), God's people

Re 21:2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

27: Why should the barren rejoice?

The desolate has many more children than she who has a husband

IOW: Those of the Spirit, of (the New) Jerusalem Above, abound in number over those of the Law

28: How are believers and Isaac alike?

Both are children of promise – IOW: Children based upon God's word (& miracle), not a work of the flesh

29: How does the relationship between Ishmael and Isaac parallel those born of the flesh and of the Spirit?

Those born of the flesh (in bondage) persecute those born of the Spirit (in grace/liberty/freedom)

30: What does the Scripture say about the bondwoman and her son, and the freewoman and her son?

- 1) Bondwoman & son – Cast Out, not an heir 2) Freewoman & son – an heir (implied: to the Father)

31: By implication, how is the believer instructed to regard the applied works of the law?

Not of the bondwoman, but of the free... therefore, 'cast out' (v30) the former!

Overview

From this chapter: Which verse leaves the greatest impression, and why?