

Galatians

Lesson 7

Chapter 3:26-4:20

Participant Guide

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Lesson 7
Sons of God
Galatians 3:26-4:20

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (*Galatians 3:28*)

Prayers

Introduction

The theme of Galatians 3:26-4:7 is sons, heirs, and eternal inheritance. Paul made a revolutionary statement by calling all believers "sons," regardless of their sex or social standing. Ancient Greek had abundant nouns and pronouns to describe human relationships, so Paul was not at a loss for words but was making a point by calling everyone sons. In Paul's time, sons received an inheritance, but daughters did not. Paul's point is that everyone in Christ is a son of God because they all receive the same inheritance; eternal life, the abiding presence of Christ's Spirit, and adoption as God's children.

Read Galatians 3:26-4:7

Gal 3:26 You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,

Gal 3:27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Gal 4:1 What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate.

Gal 4:2 He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father.

Gal 4:3 So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world.

Gal 4:4 But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law,

Gal 4:5 to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.

Gal 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."

Gal 4:7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Discussion

1. How do believers become sons of God (verse 26)?

7. What is the benefit of baptism into Christ as sons of God, verse 4:6?

Gal 4:6 Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “*Abba*, Father.”

8. Being a son of God through baptism makes us an heir. What are we heir to (verse 4:7)?

9. The writer of Hebrews said the law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming, not the realities themselves (Hebrews 10:1). With this in mind, how does Paul say the law was like a guardian in Galatians 3:29-4:7?

Gal 3:29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.

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Gal 4:7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Read Galatians 4:7-4:20

Gal 4:7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Gal 4:8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.

Gal 4:9 But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

Gal 4:10 You are observing special days and months and seasons and years!

Gal 4:11 I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

Gal 4:12 I plead with you, brothers, become like me, for I became like you. You have done me no wrong.

Gal 4:13 As you know, it was because of an illness that I first preached the gospel to you.

Gal 4:14 Even though my illness was a trial to you, you did not treat me with contempt or scorn. Instead, you welcomed me as if I were an angel of God, as if I were Christ Jesus himself.

Gal 4:15 What has happened to all your joy? I can testify that, if you could have done so, you would have torn out your eyes and given them to me.

Gal 4:16 Have I now become your enemy by telling you the truth?

Gal 4:17 Those people are zealous to win you over, but for no good. What they want is to alienate you from us, so that you may be zealous for them.

Gal 4:18 It is fine to be zealous, provided the purpose is good, and to be so always and not just when I am with you.

Gal 4:19 My dear children, for whom I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you,

Gal 4:20 how I wish I could be with you now and change my tone, because I am perplexed about you!

Discuss

10. Verse 4:7 begins a long, sometimes confusing, discussion contrasting spiritual slavery to freedom in Christ that continues to the end of his letter. Discuss Paul's images of slavery in the following verses:

a. Verse 4:7, We are no longer slaves but _____

Gal 4:7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

b. Verse 4:8, We are no longer slaves to _____

Gal 4:8 Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.

c. John 8:34, We are no longer slaves to _____

Jn 8:34 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

Jn 8:35 Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever.

Jn 8:36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

d. Galatians 3:23, we are no longer slaves to _____

Gal 3:23 Before this faith [in Jesus Christ] came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed.

11. In verses 9-10, Paul refers to the miserable principles regarding the observance of sacrifices on special days and months and seasons and years. Numbers 28:14-15 is an example of the special days and seasons Paul is referring to. How do making the sacrifices described in Numbers 28:14-15 illustrate the futility of maintaining Jewish regulations while trusting in God's grace through salvation by faith in Christ?

^{Nu 28:14} With each bull there is to be a drink offering of half a hin of wine; with the ram, a third of a hin; and with each lamb, a quarter of a hin. This is the monthly burnt offering to be made at each new moon during the year. ¹⁵ Besides the regular burnt offering with its drink offering, one male goat is to be presented to the LORD as a sin offering.

12. What language to the Galatians in verses 4:11-20 indicates the seriousness of living by Jewish ceremonial law or by faith in Christ?

Closing Prayer