

Lesson 6 - Galatians 4:1-11**Main Idea**

While Paul continues to persuade the Galatians to abandon their desire to gain God's favour through the works of the law, he now shows us that God has graciously adopted us, giving us the position of sons and the privilege of sonship.

Study Questions

1. How is an heir, when he is a child, both like and unlike a slave, according to 4:1-2?
2. How were the Jewish people, while they were under the law, like an heir who is a child?
3. Paul tells us that this status changed when Christ redeemed those who were under the law. How did Jesus do this (see 2:19-20 and 3:13)?
4. Describe the situation that believers in Christ are now in as a result of redemption (4:5-7).
5. Adopted children sometimes struggle to believe they are as much a part of their family as biological children are. What has God done to enable believers to know they are truly his children, truly part of his family?
6. By speaking in the second person ("you"), Paul makes it clear in 4:7 that this status as "God's child" ("God's son") is true of Gentiles as well as Jews. What, according to 4:8-9, is the central difference between the Gentile's former enslavement and their current experience of freedom?
7. What will these Gentile Christians be doing if they place themselves under the law of Moses?

8. What do you think might have motivated these Gentiles to begin religious rules about special days in the calendar, or about circumcision, or about food laws?

9. It is a common tendency to try to do things that will increase our sense of self-worth or increase the appearance of our worth in the eyes of others. Observing the law of Moses seems to have been for the Galatian Christians a way of attempting to make themselves better in the eyes of God and others. What are ways you are tempted to do this exact thing?

10. How do the truths of this passage help you in resisting this temptation to prove your worth?

Whole Bible Connections¹

Redemption From Slavery. The event that most clearly defines the Old Testament understanding of God's salvation is the exodus, in which God liberated his people through Moses from harsh servitude and brought them into their "inheritance": the land promised centuries earlier to Abraham. In the New Testament it becomes apparent that this was but a type² of God's greater work of redeeming all humanity. Christ is the new and greater Moses, entering onto our servile condition and liberating us from slavery to sin through his death and resurrection, and so bringing us into the freedom of sonship.

Personal Reflection

- Write down two or three takeaways from this study.

- What is one way you can put these into practice in the coming week?

- How might this exercise affect your prayer life?

- If possible, find someone to share these thoughts with and pray together.

¹ Zeigler - Galatians pg. 49

² "Typology" is a method of biblical interpretation in which a real, historical object, place, or person is recognized as a pattern or foreshadowing (a "type") of some later object, place or person. For example, the Bible presents Adam as a "type" of Christ (Rom.5:14)