

Galatians ch 4 vs 1-7

We've been studying the purpose of the law and it's relationship to the promise, knowing that the law brings a curse but the promise brings blessing. and Since the Galatians have been falling under the influence of the Judaizers (who have been seeking to bring them into the bondage and legalism of the law). Telling them that true righteousness comes from obedience to the Law of Moses, Paul has been taking the time to explain to them how they've begun to fall from grace by seeking to be perfected before God by the works of the law, or works of the flesh.

He reminds them that justification before God, and righteousness before God has always been on the basis of grace through faith. and It's never been merited through the works of legalism, if I do this and this or don't do this or this, then God will reward me for good behavior, but that's not what the bible teaches. God will be a debtor to no man, He owes you and me nothing, but He offers us the gift of righteousness before Him freely to any that would desire it by simple trust in Jesus Christ and faith in Him.

Paul points out that believing God and placing your trust in Him is always the way that God has imputed righteousness to man by taking us clear back to the beginning in the book of Genesis. and Reminding us of God's dealings with Ab 430 yrs before the law was ever given and how Ab believed God and *it* was accounted to him as righteousness. What was, his works, his obedience to the law, no he didn't work for his righteousness nor did he obey the law because the law didn't exist, it was his *belief* that was accounted to him as righteousness. and God made a promise to Ab saying that in his Seed all the nations of the earth would be blessed, and that promise wasn't in reference to the Jewish nation.

He didn't say in your seeds, but in your Seed in reference to Jesus Christ and surely we've been blessed by the coming of Jesus Christ and our righteousness before God isn't found in obedience to the law but by faith in Him, as we "put on Christ" as it says in vs 27. Because once a covenant has been ratified there's nothing that can be done to change that, and we talked about that last week and God ratified a covenant with Ab. and So the law wasn't a substitute for the Promise because if that were the case it would've been found in opposition to the Promise, the law was an additive so that we might be made aware of our sinful condition before God and our need for the promise. The promise of a savior, the promise of eternal life not based upon the works of the law but based upon grace through faith. The law was given to reveal sin not to remove sin, it wasn't given to make us righteous, it was given to reveal our wretchedness. It was given to teach us of our sinful nature and our inability to stand up to the righteous standards of God, if righteousness could come through the law then Christ died in vain.

But we know that righteousness doesn't come by the law, for by the law is the knowledge of sin, Rom 3:19-20 "*Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.*" You see the law exposes our sin and shows us our need for a Savior, it's simply our tutor or our schoolmaster, it's that which takes us by the hand and leads us to Jesus. We look into the perfect law of God and say if that's what it takes to be accepted before God, I'm lost, I've blown it, I'm going down and I need someone to save me. and The law says that's what I've been trying to tell you, and it points us to the cross so that we might be recipients of the grace of God and once that work has been done, the law has done all that it can do for us.

It's just a temporary means of supervision until we've been turned over to the Teacher, Jesus Christ (Notice vs24-28) We are all co-equals in Christ; it doesn't matter what your ethnic background whether you're the employee or the employer, whether you're male or female. and Again I'm not trying to take away from biblical structure of the home. The role and responsibility of the man to be the priest of the home, loving his wife as Christ loved the church and gave Himself for her. Or the woman's responsibility to come alongside of her husband, being a helpmate to him, but as far as our standing before God, He sees us all the same we're one in Christ.

Vs29

Now Paul continues on in this same flow with how the law fits into the big picture, emphasizing really the temporality of it all and how once we're partakers of the Promise in Christ, to fall back into any form of legalism is to regress in our walks. They thought that they were progressing, coming into further revelation, Paul says no, you're regressing and subjecting yourself to the weak and beggarly elements that Jesus has died to free you from.

Vs1-2

Now here Paul falls back into another practical example just as he did in vs 15 to help them further develop their understanding of how the law applies to the big picture. and In that culture and sometimes still today if you were a very wealthy Roman, you're children would be raised by your servants. and Even though your child is an heir to your estate and technically the master of all the servants through that inheritance, right now he has no more rights than does one of your servants. Really less because the servant was commanded by the master of the house and the child was commanded or instructed by the servant. and He would be under that type of order until such time as the Father had appointed, I don't know anything about Bill Gates. But if he was married and had children and had nannies and all looking out after them, even though one day they're going to inherit his authority and fortune, right now they are being looked out for by the servants. and They don't have the authority to write million dollar checks. They're under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by their father.

Vs3

This Paul's application of the illustration, that even as an heir to a physical estate is held under the authority of the literal tutors or schoolmasters, even so prior to Jesus Christ we were held under the authority of the elements of the world. Now Paul doesn't explain exactly what those elements are, but based upon the context it seems fairly evident that he's in reference to the law.

This word "elements" basically means the elementary principals, the ABC's, in other words what Paul is saying is that for some 15 centuries the Jews had been in kindergarten or grade school more or less, learning the spiritual ABC's. So that they might be ready and prepared for the time that Christ would come, then they would receive the full revelation, because Jesus is way more than the basic A and C He's the A-Z, the Alpha and the Omega, He encompasses the "full alphabet" of God's revelation to man. So in essence what Paul is saying is that to revert back to law after receiving Christ is not a step toward spiritual maturity, to the contrary it's going back to grade school. The law wasn't meant to be God's final revelation; it was merely the preparation for that final revelation in Christ.

But how easily we're deceived into thinking that the whole Jesus to receive forgiveness thing is good, but it's basic. But as we begin to mature we realize that we need to be doing this and this and now that you're maturing you realize that make-up or gold jewelry is from the pit of hell. and I used to listen to music with electric guitars but now I realize that I become more Christ like as listen to elevator music. and Paul is saying what are you doing, you've been set free in Christ only to find yourself in bondage to rules and regulations to try and obtain a certain standard of holiness before God and your taking away from the work of the cross.

Now again I'm not talking about freedom in Christ to sin, we're not to use the grace of God as a cloak or a covering for vice or sin. What I'm saying is that legalism doesn't display spiritual maturity, it displays our lack of understanding concerning the grace of God. The law was only to act as a temporary overseer until Christ had come, revealing our need for a Savior. He's basically reiterating again that which he stated in the previous ch in vs 23-24 (read) and this is his exposition of that statement, he goes on.

Vs4-5

There's a lot to be gleaned from just these couple of short vs 1st of all he says, when the *fullness* of time had come. In other words God isn't just sort of shooting from the hip, "well I wonder what I should do now, I know, how about this??" God doesn't work that way; He knows every issue that pertains to every circumstance both individually and personally and then also globally in the big picture. and He's working all things according to the fullness of time, God has perfect timing, He doesn't work things out too soon, nor is He ever running late, He's got it all under control. and Even though God lives outside of the time and space continuum (dwelling in the eternal) He interacts with mankind on that basis knowing that we're restricted to time and space.

So I believe that when God gives us a time period in the bible, He means what He says and says what He means. When He created the heavens and the earth in 6 days resting on the 7th, I take it to mean 6, 24hr periods by which He created everything, resting on the 7th. Well I thought a day was as a thousand yrs and a thousand yrs was as a day with God? It is with God, but not with us and God knows that and He's not into playing mind games with us. When He told Israel that they'd be going into captivity for 70 yrs, they went into captivity for 70yrs, if they went into captivity for 1,000 yrs for everyday that the sentence was pronounced, they'd still be there.

So it's not wise to try and spiritualize certain days and not others unless the text allows for it because then you have no point of reference and it's a guessing game. But to get back to the point God operates according to a divine timetable by which He orchestrates all the events in human history according to His sovereignty. and When the fullness of time arrives according to this aspect of His plan, (whatever this may be) He instigates whatever it may be in order to bring His will to pass.

In many cases He tells us in the scriptures what it is that He's planning to do and when it is that He's going to do it. For instance In Daniel ch 9 we can see when it was that God was going to send His Son into the world, when the fullness of time would be, culminating in the sending forth of His Son. We read there that 70, 7yr periods were to be determined for the nation of Israel, your bible might read 70 weeks, but the literal translation being 70, 7's in regards to 70, 7yr periods. and We read in vs 25 of Dan ch 9 that *from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem* would be 69, 7 yr periods.

We don't have time to get into the history of it all but when that command was given you could calculate exactly 483yrs to the day until the Messiah entered Jerusalem which is of course the day that we refer to often as the triumphal entry of Christ into Jerusalem. and We're told there that the Messiah would be cut-off which of course Jesus was cut-off, crucified on the cross and so there's one more 7yr period to be determined for Israel, the time that the bible refers to as Jacob's trouble or the great tribulation. So God operates according to a divine timetable that when His sovereignty sees fit, He lets us in on.

A couple more scriptures regarding God working according to the fullness of time, Mark 1:14-15 *"Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ***The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.***"* We read in Eph 1:10 *"that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth--in Him."*

In other words God's plan is to one day, at the appointed time, in the fullness of time, wrap up every issue into one issue and that issue is a person, the person of Jesus Christ Everything will have its culmination, it's answer or fulfillment in the Lord Jesus. If it concerns Judgment it's because they rejected Jesus, if it's about holiness, Christ is the standard by which we are all measured, if it's an unanswered question for us maybe. We'll see the fullness of Christ, His eternal work and plan and it will all be tied up and there won't be any loose ends, everything will be answered and resolved in the light of the Lord Jesus in the *fullness of the times*. Now in this particular case concerning our text right now, the direct context is regarding the law, so, as the United Bible Societies Handbook Series would put it. *The emphasis here is on a time designated by God as appropriate for his act in order to assure man's deliverance from helplessness and subservience to the Law and to those forces that are opposed to God.*

In other words the law had run it's course, the fullness of time was at hand and Christ was sent forth. Rom 10:4 *"For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes."* and It's worth noting that when the fullness of time is at hand God will send forth His Son once again only this time not as the lamb of God to be slain for the sin of the world. But as the lion of the tribe of Judah, bringing forth judgment upon all who have rejected His love and grace and remained unrepentant of their sin.

This is another detail that I would have us mark concerning this vs, the fact that God “sent forth” His Son, the Father sending forth His only begotten Son from the eternal glory of heaven in the fullness of time. What does that speak of? The deity of Jesus Christ, being the Son of God means having the same nature as God meaning you are God, which gets into the concept of the Trinity 3 in 1. The triune God, God represented in 3 persons The Father the Son and the Holy Spirit, all of which are represented in this text; we see the Father and the Son here in vs 4 and the Spirit in vs 5.

So the fact that the Father sent forth His Son speaks of the God-hood of Jesus Christ the fact that He was born of a woman, meaning a human mother, speaks of the humanity of Jesus Christ Him being both fully God and fully man. and He was born under the law, not only in the sense of the general accountability that all of mankind has before God. But specifically being born a Jew under the Mosaic Law, under the old covenant, that being necessary so that He could pay the penalty or the payment in full that was demanded by the law. So that He could fulfill the righteous requirements of the law, Jesus said, *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”*

Why, so that mankind could be released of the curse of the law, not being able to make that payment ourselves, (we being spiritually bankrupt before God) and we’ll talk more about that in just a minute.

But so far even in just this one vs Paul has told us who it was that has come, it was God’s only begotten Son, deity, God in the flesh. He’s told us when He came, and it was at the appointed time, the fullness of time right at the perfect time when the world was fully ripened and set for His coming. and He’s told us how He came, by means of a woman, the woman being doorway more or less if you’ll allow me that term, by which God stepped into time and space taking on humanity. So Paul has revealed 3 things pertaining to Jesus Christ in this vs and now he goes on to tell us why He came and the purpose is 2-fold. The 1st in vs 5

Vs5

So 1st of all He came to redeem those who were under the law, which is a blanket way of saying all the world. and Everyone who was under the law, (which is everyone, who has ever lived,) needed a redemption price paid for their sin debt. Because what this means to be under the law is to be under the penalty or the sentence of the law. In other words when you violate the law you come *under* the law, which means that now the law has now made a demand upon you and in order for you to be set free, that demand has to be fulfilled.

So if you're caught speeding and you are going a certain amount of mph over the speed limit, you're given a fine of say \$100.00 and until that demand is met, you're under the sentence of the law. If you go to court and the judge says you owe \$100.00 for this ticket and you say I don't have \$100.00 then he says fine, the you get 3 days or 5 days in the county jail. and You have to meet that demand to be "redeemed" from that penalty of the law. and Once you've met that demand your free.

Being under the law of God is much more serious because the penalty for breaking that law is death and we've all been busted, we're all guilty, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. So I'm under the sentence of death and I can't be set free from that requirement until that demand has been met. and So up until the time of Christ man has been under the law, under the sentence and curse of the law. But (read vs 4 and 1st ½ of vs 5) and what was the redemption price? The shedding of His blood, Him being *"delivered up because of our offenses, and being raised because of our justification."* The atonement for our souls being found in His blood, His pure and undefiled blood washing and cleansing our guilt and sin ridden hearts. and He was the propitiation or the substitutionary satisfactory payment in full for our sin, Him taking our place, purchasing us with His blood. For the express purpose of setting us free from the bondage of sin and death that we might live a life of righteousness after God, Rom 3:23-24 *"for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."*

That was the purpose of His coming to redeem us and then 2^{ndly} (read last ½ vs 5), That we might adopted into the family of God becoming sons of God. and This is more than oh look a little baby with out a home lets adopt him or her, this speaks of being brought into full son-ship whereby all of heavens resources are ours. The moment you give your heart to Jesus Christ this privilege is extended to you.

Now don't let me confuse you as to the difference between your *condition* in the Lord upon conversion and your *position* in the Lord upon conversion. To quote Warren Wiersbe *"When a sinner trusts Christ and is saved, as far as his condition is concerned, he is a "spiritual babe" who needs to grow. and He sights 1 Pet 2:2-3 which says, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is gracious."* He goes on to say, *but as far as his position is concerned, he is an adult son who can draw upon the Father's wealth and who can exercise all the wonderful privileges of sonship."* Then he adds *"we enter God's family by regeneration (which means rebirth or being born again) but we enjoy God's family by adoption. The Christian does not have to wait to begin enjoying the spiritual riches he has in Christ."*

Because as we'll see in a minute if you're a son, then you're a joint heir through Christ. So sure you need to develop a strong walk with God, maturing, partaking of the pure milk of the word of God, and as the writer of Heb says, *strengthening the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, and making straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.* Heb 12:12-13 But you've got the same heavenly resources available to you through Christ as does Billy Graham or anyone else. Now on quick thing that I want to point out and then we'll move on, I want you to notice that we become the *sons* of God plural, not to be confused with the only begotten *Son* of God (singular), yes we become the children of God, but beware of any teaching that would seek to set you on an equal plain with the only begotten Son of God. I know that they're out there, but just be careful to avoid that trap that would seek to elevate you to the point of being equal with Jesus, we become sons of God, not the only begotten Son of God.

Vs6

So as I pointed out just a minute ago we see the whole Trinity involved in our spiritual experience: God the Father sent His Son to die *for us*, God the Son sent His Spirit to *live in us*. and Where is it that it abides, where is it that the Spirit has been sent as we receive Jesus Christ? Into our hearts; speaking not of the literal physical organ, but rather that which is deep with in you that contains the inner hidden person, where the real you exists. As the vines Greek dictionary puts it, it's that which, *occupies the most important place in the human system. Standing for man's entire mental and moral activity, both the rational and the emotional elements. In other words, the heart is used figuratively for the hidden springs of the personal life.*(From Vine's Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words, Copyright (c) 1985, Thomas Nelson Publishers)

It's the seat of every emotion, moral nature and spiritual life. and This is where the Holy Spirit takes up residence in your life, in the core of everything that you are, that's what Jesus was talking about when He said behold I stand at the door and knock, the door of the deepest recesses of your being, and if any man hears my voice and opens the door I will come into Him and dine with him and He with me. Speaking of that intimate fellowship that He longs to have with you and with me, and this is how He does that, by means of the Holy Spirit. and It's the Spirit's presence with in us that allows us to call God our "Abba" which is an extremely intimate form of the word "Father", having become a partaker of the divine nature. The Spirit confirming or testifying of our sonship, it's not the Spirit that makes you a son, that happens by faith in Jesus Christ but the Spirit, is the seal or the proof of that sonship, that's what validates the fact that you are a son. That's how God bears witness in your heart that you are his son, by giving you the Holy Spirit.

Believe me when I tell you that it's not to be taken for granted to be able to call God, our Father. It cost Jesus dearly to bring us this privilege of intimacy with God. The law could never do that work, it could never give a person intimacy with God and it definitely could never give a person God's nature. All it could do was reveal to a person their inadequacies and their desperate need for God's nature.

So when a person reverts back to legalism, not only do they undo the work of Jesus Christ on the cross becoming slaves again to bondage, because Jesus didn't die to make us slaves, He died to make us sons. But they also deny the divine nature that's with in them and give place to the old nature or the flesh to feed itself when the bible tells us to crucify the flesh along with it's passions and desires. And as we conclude we see that since Jesus Christ abides in us by grace through faith by the power of the Holy Spirit and not by works of the law.

Vs7

We're no longer slaves to the law but heirs of the heavenly estate, how? Through Christ Jesus, we inherit the entire fortune not by works of righteousness that we've done, but rather it's given to us freely through the Son of God by faith. I rarely enter little stories but this morning I'm going to close by reading this story that I got in the mail this week...

We inherit everything upon receiving the Son, whoever takes the Son of God into their hearts inherits the entire heavenly estate, we are heirs of God through Christ.