

From Slaves To Sons

Galatians 3:23-4:7

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In Galatians 3, Paul showed us what the law cannot do. Let me give you a quick review and then catch up to where we're at. In Galatians 3:1-5, Paul said the law cannot give you the Holy Spirit. We can't be recipients of the Spirit of God by works of the law. You can't do good deeds in order to get the Holy Spirit, which is necessary for salvation. In verses 6-9, the law cannot give righteousness. In verses 10-14, the law brings not a blessing, but a curse, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law." In verses 15-18, we saw the law cannot change the original covenant or promise that God made to Abraham. Abraham believed God when He made the promise of the promised seed, and God imputed to Abraham righteousness.

As we go through this series, and I know there are some that are thinking, This is boring or I don't want to hear this, I'm going to continue to hammer home the message of Galatians because we live in a day and age when this truth is being abandoned and forgotten. This doctrine is absolutely essential to the Christian life. We're saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone; and that never ever ever ever changes. If you add to that, take away from, water down, don't believe or preach that, you have not the gospel of Jesus Christ. If you don't have the gospel of Jesus Christ, then you've lost Christianity. Paul is hammering this home, and, Lord willing, by the end of this series in Galatians, you'll have a good grasp on what it means to be saved by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone.

Paul then asks two questions in verses 19 and 21. I want to go back and point them out. He says, "Wherefore then serveth the law?" He's asking the question: Then what purpose is the law? If the law cannot give us the Spirit, it can't give us righteousness, it only brings a curse, and it cannot change the original covenant, then Paul is (verse 19) anticipating an argument, "Well, then, why is the law even given?" He says, "It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come," the seed that should come is a reference to Jesus Christ when we would be able to trust Him for salvation or the gospel would come. It's showing us that the law was only temporary. Then, he shows us that the law convicts us of sin but cannot save (verse 21). "Is the law then against the promises of God?" The first question (verse 19): Why then the law? "...because of transgressions, till the seed," the Messiah, "should come."

Pre-Christ is the dispensation of law, and then once Jesus comes, this is that dispensation of God's grace. It doesn't mean God's grace wasn't manifested pre-Christ but means that it's a time period when we are saved by that grace of God. In verse 21, it says that the law was given to provoke our sin, to lead us to understand that we're sinners. In verse 22, "But the scripture hath concluded," here's the conclusion, "all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe," not behave. The conclusion to the first little section on the law and grace is in verse 22, that we are all sinners. He's quoting from Psalm 14:3 where it says all have sinned, all have fallen short of the glory of God (Paul quoted it in the book of

Romans), and because of that, we can't save ourselves. When you basically say that you cannot be saved by the law, it means you cannot save yourself. That's what the majority of people think. They think that you do something to save yourself. Either you save yourself or God saves you, you don't work together for your salvation, and we cannot be saved because we're sinners. We've broken God's law. The wages of sin is death. We're all under the condemnation and judgment of the law. Christ came, and we have salvation by faith of Jesus Christ, and it's through believing. Faith in Christ is the same as believing in Christ, verse 22, not behaving.

A simple illustration is in Acts 16 when Paul and Silas were in a Philippian jail. Remember they were singing at midnight and God sent an earthquake and the jail was opened? The Philippian jailer came in and thought that they had escaped and was going to take his own life with a sword. Instead of letting him kill himself so they could escape, they said, "Do yourself no harm. We're all here." The jailer comes in and asks this question—it's in the Bible—it's so simple: What must I do to be saved? Did you ever notice Paul didn't say, "Keep the Ten Commandments, go to church, get a Christian haircut, get baptized." No. What did Paul say? Believe. He didn't say, "Behave," he said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved." How easy is that?

When I have cultists knock on my door, Galatians is for the cultist that knocks on your door. He tells me I have to do certain things in order to be saved or go to heaven, "Jesus is great, but you need to join our church and stop drinking coffee and wear certain kinds of underwear; and don't smoke, and don't chew, and don't hang out with those that do, and you can go to heaven." I ask them the question from Acts 16, "What must I do to be saved?" It's so simple: Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved. You don't really even have to go anywhere else in the Bible, but the entire book of Romans and Galatians is all about how we are saved by grace, through faith, in Christ alone.

We begin tonight in verse 23. Paul said the law was temporary, verse 19. In verses 21-22, the law convicts of sin but cannot convert or save us, and now in verses 23-29 he said the law prepared the way for Christ. There's a good purpose of the law, it actually prepared the way for Christ to come and to be the Savior of those who were under the condemnation of the law.

Paul starts in verses 23-25 and give two similes. A simile is a figure of speech used to compare two things that are similar. He's using what you might call an analogy, but technically it is a simile. The imagery is first of all of that under the law we were in prison. We were locked up. When Christ came, we were set free. Under the law, the second simile, is that we had a tutor or someone who was our guardian, the King James Bible has our schoolmaster or one who would lead us to Christ, and then goes on to say that we're not under the law any longer. Since Christ has come, we're free from the schoolmaster. It's verse 24. The word "schoolmaster" would be better as guardian or tutor who watches over us, and I'll explain what that means.

Look at this first simile in verse 23. He says, "But before faith came," that's pre-Christianity, pre-Christ, under the old dispensation of law. "...we," Paul uses this personal pronoun "we" quite a

bit. We're not sure who he has in mind. It's probably we Jewish believers or we Jews who had given the law. He said, "...were kept under the law," and here's our expression or simile, "shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed." The "faith which should afterwards be revealed," is Christianity. Jude says, "...earnestly contend for the faith." The phrase, "the faith" in the New Testament is used for the body of belief of Christianity, so we're to "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once," and for all "delivered unto the saints." Before Christ came, and we had the faith, we had our lives lived under the law. The imagery or the picture, the simile, verse 23, was that we were in prison. We were locked in a jail under the bondage of the law. When Christ came, Christ has actually opened the prison doors and set the captives free. That's a cool picture of what the law is like. It takes us to prison and locks us up.

The second simile is in verse 24. It's used of what the King James calls the "schoolmaster" or tutor or guardian. "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster," this is a second picture, "to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come," after Christ had shown up and now that we have the faith, "we are no longer under a schoolmaster." This is a clear teaching here, this simile, that we're no longer under the law. We're no longer under the law for justification or sanctification, generally salvation. It doesn't mean that we don't keep the law because the Spirit of God has written on our hearts and we live and walk in the Spirit, and God's moral laws are still good, holy, and righteous. We're not trying to do that to earn, merit, or deserve salvation, acceptance, or to get a better standing or more righteous standing before God. Galatians is primarily dealing with the life of the believer being justified by faith.

What is this tutor or this schoolmaster? In the Roman world, and that's the background for it, usually they were a slave in a household, a very dependable and trustworthy slave. They were given the responsibility of watching over the children in the family who were under age. They would sometimes teach them (that's why it's sometimes called a schoolmaster, we would say school teacher), but their responsibility was more of a guardian or a protector. They also had the responsibility of disciplining and training the children. In the Roman household, they would have the children, but would have a trusted slave who would actually be responsible for them. We would call it a nanny, maybe today, that watches over the kids. They would take them to school, bring them home from school, see that they did their chores, ate the food that they were supposed to eat. They would maybe tutor, teach, train them. Some translations have tutor. They were kind of like a guardian that would watch over them. It was always while they were under age. That's the intended meaning here. Once they reached a certain age, they were no longer under their guardian, no longer under their schoolmaster or tutor; so the idea is, under the law, the old dispensation, we were not only in prison waiting to be released by Christ, but another picture is that we were under age, under the law, and couldn't come to maturity until Christ came and were no longer under that tutor. That's the simile of the guardian.

Notice in verse 24, at least in my King James Bible, "...to bring us," is in italics. I don't know why, but I hadn't seen it until this week when I was studying that. A lot of commentaries point that out. Whenever you have those italicized words in your Bible, they're included by the translators to create a continuity or flow but are not in the Greek manuscripts. They're not in the original. It could change the meaning just a tad bit, although both are actually a biblical

concept. If you omit or take them out, it's "Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster unto Christ," so the emphasis would be not necessarily to bring us to Christ, but the emphasis would be until Christ, which would be consistent with what we read earlier in verse 19, that the law was temporary until Christ came. We have here the picture of the law and then the dispensation of grace when Christ arrived, but the law certainly is given to bring us to Christ in that we see our sin, we see our need of Christ, and we repent and trust Him.

I've often used the analogy of a thermometer. When you take your temperature with a thermometer, you find out you need to take something to treat the fever that you might have. Now, a thermometer, or something that takes your temperature, isn't going to take your temperature down. You can walk around with a thermometer in your mouth all day, and it's not going to do anything. If you realize you're running a fever, then you have to take the proper medicine to lower the fever. The law is like a thermometer. It shows you your sin. It drives you to Jesus, the medicine that we need to remedy the malady or the sickness or the disease that we have, which, in this case, is our sin so that we might be justified, verse 24, by faith.

You might want to make sure you mark all of those references in your Bible in the book of Galatians. Those are clear references, and this is a classic in verse 24, that we are "justified by faith." In other places it says without the deeds of the law, so that's why we say faith alone, in Christ alone—no works or deeds, just trusting and believing in Jesus Christ. We're no longer under the law.

Here are the benefits, and I love verses 26-29. There are three of them, if you're taking notes, that we have now in Christ. The first is we become sons of God. The second is that we become part of the family of God, and the third is that we become heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, children of Abraham. Notice in verses 26-27 that we become sons of God. He says, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." Again, there's the clear statement that we are God's children by faith in Jesus Christ. "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." These verses are just pregnant with doctrinal truth, and I'll try not to get too bogged down. I want you to look at them closely. Paul says, in verse 26, "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."

The word "children" in verse 26 is not the normal Greek word translated children, which is teknon. This is a different Greek word. It's the Greek word huioi. It has the idea of children, but adult legal-age children. The words are closely related and sometimes interchangeable, but they are a little bit different. Now, we're going to get down in Galatians 4 the doctrine of adoption, and I'll save some of my thoughts there. When it says "children" there, it literally could be translated sons of God. When you hear the term "sons of God," don't think of males or men as sons of God and that the girls are the daughters of God. The word huioi actually has the idea of placed as a legal-age son or daughter, and here's the reason why, so that you can begin to enjoy your inheritance. You have all the freedoms, all the responsibilities, all the blessings, all the benefits of an adult son or daughter.

When you are born again and become a Christian, you are regenerated by the Holy Spirit.

You're born into God's family. You are not just an infant or a baby, you are actually, at that moment, also a huio, a son or daughter, and you are in a place of full adult sonship with all the rights to be able to draw the benefits. You can drive the car and spend the money. You can enjoy the blessings of being a full adult son or daughter. He gives us some analogies that picture this when we get down into Galatians 4.

Paul says the first blessing or benefit that the law cannot produce that only God's grace and faith in Christ can produce is that you become an adult son or daughter in your standing and your position before God. In Galatians 4:5, the same concept is tied into being sons and daughters, the adoption, when we're adopted; so we're not just born into God's family and get God's nature, but we are adopted into God's family and legally we have that full standing as adult sons and daughters.

Paul explains it in verse 27, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Every person, the moment they are saved, is placed in Christ. In this expression here, he uses the term "baptized." Baptism (baptizo) has two meanings. It means literal water baptism where you are dunked or immersed in water but has a symbolic meaning. This is so very important, and a lot of people miss this or never hear about this. It has a symbolic meaning of when you were born again, you were taken out of your identification with Adam (which is sin, death, and judgment) and placed into Christ, which is used as a baptism. Your identification in Christ is your baptism by the Spirit of God.

How did you get out of Adam and how did you get into Christ? By the Holy Spirit. You didn't psych yourself up and kind of jump out of Adam and jump in Christ and do something. It was done by the Holy Spirit. This may seem like, "Well, so what," you know, but the implications are staggering. Every Christian, the moment they are born again, regenerated, are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, they are sealed by the Holy Spirit, they are adopted into God's family, they are taken out of Adam and placed in Christ. There's no such thing as a Christian who hasn't had that happen. You can have all that happen to you and not even know it, and you can't enjoy what you don't know you have. If you know that you're like a full legal son or daughter and that all is yours, the inheritance is yours, and you're no longer in Adam and are in Christ, then you can start enjoying the Christian life. In Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." How'd you get in Christ? The baptism of the Holy Spirit—you were taken out of Adam and placed in Christ.

I don't want to get sidetracked. I can do a bunch of little footnotes tonight, but I don't believe that once you've been placed in Christ, out of Adam, by the Holy Spirit that you can ever get back out of Christ back into Adam. There's nothing that would explain how you would do that. You didn't get yourself in Christ; you can't get yourself out of Christ. So, once in Christ, always in Christ. I know Christians will disagree with that. That's fine. You can do that, but I'm convinced of the truth of this doctrine that the Spirit takes me out of Adam and places me in Christ. If you've been baptized into Christ, then you put on Christ. You have been placed into Christ, identified with Christ. Write down 1 Corinthians 12:13. When I say, "Write it down," I mean write it down. Write it down and read it over and over and over again. This is a doctrinal

explanation of what I just said. Write down Romans 6. It's the same doctrine of being identified with Christ in His death and resurrection, and that's what happens the moment you believe in Christ.

Notice at the end of verse 27 it says that you "...have put on Christ." Do you know that phrase, "put on Christ," is actually the same term used that Paul has in Colossians where you would put on clothes—you take off the old clothes and put on the new clothes. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." You put on Christ so that now you can actually live Christ, so now you become the sons of God. We'll see in Galatians 4:5 that it's by adoption.

The second blessing is in verse 28; that is, we are now placed into the family of God. This is our position in the family of God, the body of Christ. In the church, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ," Paul's familiar phrase, "in Christ," "Jesus." The law could not do this. The law could not do what verses 26-27 says, make us sons and daughters. The law cannot make us one family. Actually, the law divided Jew and Gentile. The law divided bond and free. The law divided male and female.

In the position...now this is very important for you to get. There's a lot of confusion and issue today over male and female, over gender issues, in our culture, and it has come into the church. Whatever the culture is confused about, it seems like the church, abandoning God's Word, follows suit and gets confusion about this stuff. I want you to notice that in the church, our position in Christ, our standing in Christ, is that there is no race; that is, Jew or Greek or Gentile. The greatest racial divide in human history was between the Jews and the Gentiles at this time. The whole world was divided—Jew and Gentile. You don't think that there was racial prejudice back then? It was so intense.

When a Jew was walking through Gentile territory, when they would actually leave Gentile territory and then enter into Jewish territory, they would take their sandals off, knock the dust off of their sandals, put them back on, and walk into Jewish territory because they didn't want to take Gentile cooties into the Jewish territory. In some cases, they would walk all the way around so that they wouldn't get defiled by the Gentiles. A male Jew would get up in the morning and say, "God, I thank you that I am a Jew and not a Gentile. God, I thank you that I'm a man and not a woman." He would pray that prayer every morning, and there was an issue there between men and women, and Jew and Gentile.

In the church now, and we hear all of this stuff about racial strife in our culture today, in Christ, in the body of Christ, there's no Jew or Gentile. Then, there's no rank, "...there is neither bond nor free," so when we come to church in our relationship to Christ in our standing before God, there's not the rich and the poor. There's not the social strata or change there. There's not the social distinction. Then, "there is neither male nor female." I don't want to get sidetracked, but it's unbelievable to me the confusion we have today with gender issues. We don't even know what we are anymore or what anybody is anymore. The Bible is very clear. There are two

genders: there is male, and there is female. All of these artificial categories and distinctions are just made up to accompany people's sinful lifestyles. God made them male and female.

By the way, in the church, in our standing before God, there's no special favor before God for a man over a woman. We're on equal territory. This is another very delicate subject, when it comes to function in the church, God has ordained that the men be leaders of the church and that the pastors and leaders of the church be male leadership. When you go through the pastoral epistles, "...If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work." The bishops, who are pastors, and the deacons are all in the masculine. There's nothing in Scripture that would support the idea of a woman pastor or an ordained woman minister, and it has nothing to do with our standing before God. You need to keep in mind in the church there's the function of male and female, but there's no distinction in our position, in our standing, before God.

The same concept carries over into the Trinity and into marriage. God is three Persons, right? God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit; three separate distinct Persons, all in essence divine, co-equal in their essence, but they have different functions. God the Father sent God the Son to be the Redeemer; God the Holy Spirit came as the Son sent Him into the world to convict men and to draw them to Christ. Each one of the Persons in the Godhead has their roles, has their functions.

Marriage between a man and a woman is a God-ordained institution that reflects the very nature and character of God Himself. The idea that the man is the head of the woman or the husband is to be the head of the wife, freak-out time in our culture today. It doesn't mean the husband is more valuable or the husband is more important. It just means he has a different function, and we should be able to understand that. When we accept what God has made, what God has designed for His glory and for our good, that's for the good of our culture, for good of mankind. Any attack on genders, any attack on marriage, is an attack on the very nature and character of God Himself because marriage is the divine institution that reflects the Godhead.

In the church you can't have two standards, one for marriage and one for the church, it's consistent with God's design today. I'm deeply troubled that many so-called Evangelical churches are ordaining women pastors, and so many of them are doing the preaching in the pulpit. I think it's highly unscriptural, unbiblical, and an attack on the very nature and character of God.

This verse is not saying there aren't male and female. It's not saying there aren't Jews and Gentiles. It's not saying there aren't social distinctions in the church. It's just saying in our acceptance before God, in our standing before God, in our position before God that the ground is level at the foot of the cross. There's not one salvation for men and another salvation for women. There's not one salvation for Jews and another one for Gentiles. There's not one salvation for rich people and another one for poor people. The cool thing is that when we come into church and we're worshipping God, there's no racial distinction, no social distinction, no

gender distinction, "For God so loved the world," amen? We're all redeemed the same way. We all have an equal standing before God. How marvelous that truly is! In Christ, the different roles, we see that reflected in marriage and also in the church.

Notice the third blessing in verse 29. The first blessing is sons of God. The second blessing we have the family of God. Those two blessings only come by grace, through faith in Christ. The third blessing, verse 29, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." I want you to note three things that you have: You are Christ's, you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise. When you see these blessings that you are heirs, remember you're a huioi, you're an adult-age son or daughter so that you have all the benefits of a legal-age child. You're adopted into God's family, that means that you can enjoy your inheritance. You might get an inheritance, but if you're under 18 you maybe have somebody who is a guardian that watches over your inheritance and makes sure that you don't get it until you're of legal age in order to be responsible in how you use it. The same is true in the spiritual realm. When you're born into God's family, you also immediately—you don't have to wait, there's no delay for you to grow or mature—get the benefits of being a legal son or daughter, thus, you are heirs.

The blessings that we see here in verses 26, 28, and 29, even the three blessings just in verse 29, "Abraham's seed," we're Christ's, "and heirs according to the promise," the law cannot produce that only God's grace by God's promises. Salvation is by faith. We are justified by faith, and remember in verse 14, we were getting "the blessing of Abraham."

Between Galatians 3 and 4, there is no break. There's no logical break. It's a continual flow. In verses 1-3, and we won't tarry on these verses, he shows man's condition under the law. Before Christ came, this was our condition under the law. He goes back to the idea of the tutor and the immature child who needed someone to watch over them. He says, "Now I say, That the heir," we just mentioned the heir in Galatians 3:29, "as long as he is a child," that he's under age, not legally of age, "differeth nothing from a servant," slave "though he be lord of all; 2 But is under tutors," which is the same concept of schoolmasters or governors, "until the time," notice the phrase "until the time," "appointed of the father." Again, that's an indication that the law is temporary, and there's an appointed time that will come on the scene. He's "under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. 3 Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world."

Say you were born into a very wealthy family, but you're only a five-year-old. You don't get to drive the fancy cars, use the money, or spend it on whatever you want. You're not of legal age. You haven't reached maturity yet, so you are a son or daughter but not at legal age where you can begin to enjoy your inheritance or the benefits. That's what he's picturing there in verses 1-2, "until the time appointed of the father." This would be the idea of God sending His Son to redeem us. We're going to see that in a couple of verses. "...we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world," the elements is actually the basics, the elementary principles, the ABCs of the world. Again, he's just using a human analogy.

In verses 4-7, Paul is actually now showing God's action through Christ of redeeming us from this state before race came. He says, "But when the fulness of the time was come, God," did something, "sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law," and He did it, verse 5, "To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." There again, it's the same word but translated "sons," *huios*, We're adult sons and daughters, and we're adopted. "And because ye are sons," again, *huios*, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son," you can say son or daughter, "and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

These verses have actually been used at Christmas quite a bit, "...the fulness of time, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem those that were under the law," that's a Christmas message, but it wasn't about Christmas. It was about Christ coming to deliver us from the old dispensation of law. Notice what happened. He came at just the right time, "...the fulness of time." When Jesus came from heaven to be born in Bethlehem, it was just the right, perfect appointed time. God is never late; God is always on time. Right? God knows what He's doing.

Preachers will point out that the world had been made one under the Roman empire. They'll point out that there were Roman roads which gave quick and easy access to spread the gospel. They'll point out that the world was Hellenized, everyone spoke the Greek language so that they could go out and preach the gospel in the Greek language, and all the reasons that the world was ripe and ready and looking for the Messiah, the chosen Deliverer. That's cool. That's true, God did it just the right time historically, but in God's divine Metanarrative—His purpose, His redemptive plan—God had just that right time. If God has just the right time for the first advent or coming of Christ, guess what? He has just the right time for the Second Coming or advent of Christ, which I hope is pretty soon. Amen? And it sure looks like it. When the time was just right, according to God's purpose and plan, God did something. We didn't save ourselves, we couldn't save ourselves. We couldn't do anything to save ourselves—we were living in darkness, we were lost, running from God, enemies of God. God took the initiative. It was the right time, and it happened in the right manner, "God sent forth His Son."

I want you to note some things in these verses here. This is a clear teaching of the deity of Jesus Christ, "God sent forth His Son." In other Scriptures, "...his only begotten Son," which means unique Son. It's clearly a reference to God the Father sending God the Son. It speaks of His full deity. Now, we have His humanity, "made of a woman," and He was born, "...under the law." That's significant. Jesus was born under that dispensation of law and that He would actually live it out, complete it, fulfill it, and die for it on the cross to satisfy the demands of the law. You have God the Father sending God the Son, "made of a woman," this is His full humanity, which also indicates His deity because if He wasn't God, why would you need to explain that He was made of a woman? How else are you made? How else would you be born? If I walked up to you and said, "I was actually born of a woman." "Wow. Awesome!" "Like, what else is there, Dude?"

The whole implication there, and I think it's kind of marvelous, is that He's from heaven. He is

eternal. He is God, so He had to be born of a woman. Do you realize what a marvelous marvelous miracle and important doctrine the virgin birth of Jesus Christ is, yet we have so many in the so-called Evangelical church today that are just willy-nilly yanking out the virgin birth of Jesus Christ like it could come or go. It's just insane. This is why Jude says, "...earnestly contend for the faith which was once," and for all, "delivered unto the saints." You can't take out the virgin birth of Christianity or you have no Christianity. You don't have a divine Christ. You don't have a Savior. You don't have a Redeemer.

"God sent forth his Son," His full deity, "made of a woman," His full humanity, why? Why did He do that? "To redeem them that were under the law," He was made under the law, verse 4, so that He could "redeem them that were under the law," you have the doctrine of redemption. We're justified, and we're redeemed. Remember, redeemed means to be bought or purchased. It means to go into the market, it was used for the slave markets—you buy a slave, purchase them, take them out, and set them free. We were slaves to sin under the bondage of the law. Jesus came from heaven to buy us with His own blood, to take us out of the slave market of sin, and to set us free. We are redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, and we've been redeemed from under the law, "...that we might receive the adoption of sons."

We are not only born into God's family, but we don't have to take time to enjoy the blessings of being children of God. We have been adopted. I don't know if you've ever thought about it, we put so much emphasis on being born again that we forget about the doctrine of adoption, and we have both in God's family. We've been born, and we've been adopted. That adoption speaks of the moment we are born into God's family and adopted, that we have full adult status of sons and daughters, which indicates we can enjoy the blessings and benefits of that now. We don't have to wait. We get to begin to draw from that and enjoy that right now. The idea that God would choose and adopt us into His family is indeed marvelous!

Verse 6, "And because ye are sons," you have been adopted into God's family, God does something for you, "God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts," and that's why now, as a child of God, you respond, "Abba, Father." The word "Abba" means daddy or papa or father. It was used by infants when they were young. It's also kind of a Greek and Hebrew concept combined for father, "Abba," two concepts of Greek and Hebrew combined to express your love for God. The Spirit of God comes into your heart.

Now, I want you to notice that you have God the Father and God the Son mentioned in verse 4, then again you have God the Father mentioned in verse 6, and now you have "the Spirit of his Son," sent forth, "into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." We have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. All three Persons of the Godhead are laid out in this text. Jesus came "...under the law, to redeem," us from the law. He did that by living in complete and total obedience to God's law and then dying on the cross to satisfy the demands of God's law. Everything that Jesus did to live the law, to satisfy the law, to pay the penalty of the law is now imputed to me, or reckoned to me. That's why I'm free of the debt. I cannot come under the law's condemnation, but He "...sent forth the Spirit...into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."

Paul shows us what the law can do: It prepares the way for Christ, and it brings the blessings of Christ. He is basically teaching us here that we're justified by faith in Christ, thus bringing us the blessings of Abraham, which is the blessing of justification by faith. We're taken from being slaves to sin and the law's condemnation, and now we become sons and daughters—one in the family of God—and heirs of God and heirs of Christ. We become the children of Abraham by faith. These are all the blessings that are ours, and it's all through grace alone, faith alone, in Christ alone. Let's pray.