

Reflection Questions

Doctrine (What does this passage teach us):

How were we redeemed as sons?

Reproof (What wrong thinking does this passage expose):

How does the slavery terminology correct our view of life before salvation?

Correction (How does this passage fix wrong thinking):

What sort of elemental things did we cling to prior to salvation?

Instruction in Righteousness (How does this passage help us to continue):

Since we are sons of God, how can that help us in our daily life?

Calvary Baptist Church

Sunday, May 14, 2023

Making Disciples for the Glory of God

Order of Service

Call to Worship ~ Hebrews 7:23-28

Song #119 ~ I Hear the Words of Love

Prayer

Scripture Reading: Genesis 1:1-31

Song #23 ~ Creation Sings the Father's Song

Scripture Reading: Genesis 2:1-25

Prayer

Sermon ~ Galatians 4:1-5

Prayer

Lord's Supper

Song #236 ~ And Can It Be

Galatians 3:14

In order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

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Text: Galatians 4:1-5

Theme: Justification and sanctification are by faith apart from the works of the Law (Gal. 3:3).

Introduction: Throughout the book of Galatians, Paul contrasts faith with the works of the Law. Not only are we justified by faith apart from the works of the Law (2:16), but we have actually died to the Law (2:19). This is not only true of justification, but also sanctification (3:3). In fact, the Law is not of faith (3:12). But what about Israel during the time of the Mosaic Covenant? Even Israel was held under bondage until the coming of Christ (4:4-5).

I) You are no longer under the Law because Christ has redeemed you (1-5).

A. What does it look like to be under the Law (1-2)?

1. The Law held Israel in bondage (1-2).

Explanation: While the son is waiting for the inheritance, he is just like a slave. He is under household managers until he reaches the age set by the father to receive his inheritance. Israel, God's firstborn son (cf. Exod. 4:22), is waiting until the time appointed by the Father to receive his inheritance. During this time of waiting, Israel was under the Law and was no different than a slave.

Objection: This illustration assumes that the father has died and that the son is waiting for the day when he inherits the estate. Certainly God the Father has not died, so how do we reconcile this discrepancy in the illustration? We must remember that illustrations break down at some point. The main point of Paul's illustration stands—when Israel was under the Law he was like a son awaiting the date set by his deceased father to receive the inheritance.

B. Israel was held in bondage under the Law until God sent His Son (3-5).

Explanation: Paul is primarily referencing Israel (cf. we; 3, 5), but broadens the application to include Gentiles (cf. you; 6-7).

1. Before Christ came, we were held in bondage to the elemental things of the world (3).

Explanation: The "elemental things of the world" is clearly a synonym for the Law (4-5). So why does Paul switch the wording to such a vague phrase? If Paul had used his standard phrase "under the Law" he would have exclusively been referencing Israel. But since he switched to "elemental things" he seems to be referencing all sorts of rules that we are enslaved to (cf. 8-10); therefore, he doesn't exclude Gentiles from this bondage.

Application: These elemental things bring bondage (3), yet we continue to live under this bondage even though we have been set free in Christ (5:1). Like the Pharisees, we place heavy burdens on people that we are unwilling to carry (Matt. 23:1-4). As parents, do we place heavy burdens on our children that we are unwilling to carry?

2. Christ redeemed those who were under the Law so that we would receive adoption (4-5).

Explanation: In order for Christ to redeem us from the Law—or more specifically the curse of the Law—He had to be born under the Law. He had to perfectly fulfill all of the requirements of the Law, so that He could be our substitute and redeem us from the curse of the Law.

Application: We're familiar with the Prodigal Son. After he had squandered his father's wealth and was eating the food from the pigs slop, he came to his senses and went back to his father. But instead of being a slave, the father fully embraced him as a son (Luke 15:11-24). We are no different than this prodigal. We have been embraced as sons.

Conclusion: This passage is like a well written story. We were held captive under the Law. But the hero enters the story, at just the right time, and frees us from our bondage.