

14. Gal 3:25-4:7 The Fullness and Freedom of the sons of God

- ◇ Vs 25 - 29 The believer's position - all who believe in Christ become sons of God.

Vs 26 YOU ARE SONS OF GOD

- clothed in Christ vs 27
What a contrast to those under the supervision of the law ... they were regarded as children. Those saved by faith in Christ are adult sons with all the attendant privileges & position of a living union with Christ brought about by being baptized into Christ. (Vs 27). This is the baptism of (or in) the Holy Spirit, which according to Paul (1Cor 12:12-13) joins all believers to Christ and unites them within the church, Christ's body. This union with Him means being "clothed" with Christ.

Explanation: in the Roman society when a youth came of age he was given a special garment which admitted him to the full rights of the family and indicated he was a grown-up son. So the Galatian believers had laid aside the old garments of the Law and had put on Christ's robe of righteousness which grants full acceptance before God.

- V. 28 Believers are all one in Christ Jesus... human distinctions lose their significance. None is spiritually superior over another ...a believing Jew is not more privileged before God than a believing Gentile. *(Not contradicting or negating teaching elsewhere on headship & submission.)*
- V. 29 believers in Christ are Abraham's seed. Christ is the Seed of Abraham, therefore being in Christ makes a believer a part of that seed and an heir of the promise to Abraham.

(Any discussion of the seed of Abraham must first take into account his natural seed, the descendants of Jacob in the 12 tribes. Within this natural seed there is a believing remnant of Jews who will one day inherit the Abrahamic promises directed specifically to them (cf. Rom 9:6, Rom 9:8). But there is also the spiritual seed of Abraham who are not Jews. These are the Gentiles who believe and become Abraham's spiritual seed. They inherit the promise of justification by faith as Paul explained earlier (cf. Gal 3:6-9). To suggest, as amillenarians do, that Gentile believers inherit the national promises given to the believing Jewish remnant — that the church thus supplants Israel or is the "new Israel" — is to read into these verses what is not there.)

4:1-3 An illustration comparing a child and slave:- Though by birthright he owned the whole estate, nevertheless he was kept in subservience like a slave in that he enjoyed no freedom and could make no decisions.

4:4 'The fullness of time'...God's perfect timing. He is never late!
'God sent forth His Son' ... born of a woman, born under the law

4:5 in Him we have redemption from the law
In Him we have adoption as the sons of God

It would be enough that we are purchased out of the slave market. But God's work for us doesn't end there; we are then elevated to the place of sons of God by adoption!

NOTE:

- i. Every human being is a child of God in the sense of being His offspring (Acts 17:28-29). Yet not every human being is a child of God in the sense of this close, adoptive relationship Paul writes of here. In this sense, there are children of God and children of the devil (John 8:44).
- ii. Paul probably has in mind the Roman custom of adoption, where adopted sons were given absolutely equal privileges in the family and equal status as heirs.
- iii. There is a sense in which this is a totally unnecessary blessing that God has given in the course of salvation, and a demonstration of His true and deep love for us. We can picture someone helping or saving someone, but not going so far as to make them a part of the family - but this is what God did for us.
- iv. We receive the adoption of sons; we do not recover it. In this sense, we gain something in Jesus that is greater than what Adam ever had. Adam was never adopted as a son of God in the way believers are. So we are mistaken when we think of redemption as merely a restoration of what was lost with Adam. We are granted more in Jesus than Adam ever had.

4:6 AND BECAUSE YOU ARE SONS ... In Him we are indwelt by the Spirit!

We know that we are the sons and daughters of God by the witness of the Holy Spirit within us. As Paul wrote in Romans 8:16: The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God.

The Holy Spirit can be called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, or linked to God the Father. This is because the nature of God is consistent among the persons of the Trinity. Here, the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of His Son because the idea of our sonship is based on Jesus' sonship.

It is fitting that those who are in fact sons have the Spirit of the Son in their hearts. This gives us both the right and the ability to cry out "Daddy!" to God our Father, even as Jesus did to His Father. "Abba is an Aramaic affectionate diminutive for 'father' used in the intimacy of the family circle. We have access to the same intimacy with God the Father that God the Son, Jesus Christ had. We don't whisper "Daddy" as if we were hesitant to speak so affectionately. Instead, we cry it out - we can come with boldness before the Throne of Grace!

NOTE: Our sonship is based on who we are in Jesus, yet there are important distinctions between our sonship and Jesus' sonship. He is the only begotten Son (John 3:16) making Him a Son by essential nature. We are adopted sons of God.

4:7 **Therefore** ... a son an heir.

There is a beautiful progression. First we are set free from slavery. Then we are declared sons and adopted into God's family. Then, as sons, we are made heirs.