

# Children of Promise

Learning Zone 10<sup>th</sup> May 2020



**Golden Text - (Gal 3:29)** If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs to the promise.



## LESSON PLAN

1. Introduction – Theme
2. Freed and Adopted by Faith
3. Do not return to Bondage
4. Free by God's Promise
5. What are the learning points?
6. Questions



## INTRODUCTION

# Christ frees believers from sin and enables them to receive his promises.

Readings from

- Galatians 3:23 to 4:31

Examine and rejoice in the freedom of being God's heirs in Christ



Last weeks lesson focused on the inheritance believers receive by faith in Christ. The process of inheritance comes to the believer by faith, not by works.

In this weeks lesson Paul focusses on the manner and the implication of the inheritance. Paul's desire was to provide a firm foundation for the faith of the Galatian believers. Paul wanted the Galatians to see the profound truth of freedom from the Law. Reference to Abraham (as we saw last week) and his heritage was a critical part of the faith. Paul used this background to demonstrate that justification was made possible through Christ

**The Focus** is that we should examine and rejoice in the freedom of being God's heirs in Christ

**The central truth** is that Christ free the believers from sin and enables them to receive his promise.

# FREED AND ADOPTED BY FAITH



Gal 3:23 -4:7

**No longer under a school master** (Gal 3:23 -25)

- Describe the difference "before faith came"? (23)
- Describe the difference "after faith came"? (25)

**Children of God by Faith** vs 26-29

- What unifies the body of Christ?

**The time of Bondage** Gal 4 vs 1-3

- What are the "basic spiritual principles of this world"
- How are we set free from them?

**Sons and Heirs** Gal 4 vs 4-7

- Contrast spiritual slavery with sonship

## Freed and Adopted by Faith

### **No Longer under a school master (Gal 3: 23-25)**

These verses identify the position of a person under the law. They are under a school master. As a student the law acts as both guardian and teacher. The pupil is not trusted with rights and responsibilities but instead schooled through discipline and correction. Verse 25 declares that believers are no longer in this preparatory relationship - after faith is come, we are no longer under the regime of the schoolmaster!!!

### **Children of God by Faith – vs 26-29**

The word "Children" is literally sons in the Greek text. It emphasises full maturity and possessions of rights and responsibilities. The use of the word *sons* shows that the believer has received the riches of God in Christ. Verse 27 emphasises that the believer has received the rights and responsibilities of sonship.. "*put on Christ*". The believer has now been provided the blessings of Christ – forgiveness of sins, being made righteous through Christ and importantly they have been given a passport to Heaven. "Baptised into Christ" for the believer does not mean that salvation comes through water baptism – it does mean it does mean that when we exercise our faith it is an act of commitment similar to going through the waters of baptism and this is publicly declaring our commitment as a Christian to the World.

Being a Christian gives us equal access to God. There is no discrimination whatsoever. You can be a slave, a business owner, a judge or a worker. Neither do nationality give any greater privilege to access God over any other nationality. We are all one!! God's qualification for eligibility show no discrimination.

### **The time of Bondage – Gal 4 vs 1-3**

Paul once again illustrates the manner of the life of the unbeliever before they convert to Christ and receives the promises of God in Christ. The word "*child*" is not the same word used in Gal 3:26 "*children*", but it is from the Greek word meaning "minor" or "*infant*". It is used to mean that the person is dependent on their father. The relationship is equivalent to that of a slave. They are dependent on food and shelter. This reflects the status of a person before they come to Christ. The sinner submits to the world. They are submissive to sin as a minor is submissive to the parent, and controlled or guided by them. Until you submit to God, through Christ, then you are captive to the wiles of the Devil.

### **Sons and Heirs (4-7)**

Fulness of time – indicates a move to maturity. Paul indicated this by saying "*time appointed of the father*" where it was the time when the rights and responsibilities are granted to the child. Paul's first focus on rights and responsibilities of the child indicated an "*adoption*" process. When the unbeliever hears the word of God and exercises their faith to accept Christ as their Lord and Saviour – they are then adopted into the family of God. We/they (as believers) are given access to God through Christ as we can treat God as our father. We become heirs and joint heirs with Christ!!! We have full access to the inheritance of God, supplied through our faith in Christ.

# DO NOT RETURN TO BONDAGE



Gal 4: 8-20

## **Knowing God** (vs 8-9)

- Why and how do some people return to bondage?

## **Turning back** (vs 10-20)

- Describe Paul's love for the Galatian believers (v 15 & 19)
- What was Paul's great concern? (v 11)
- How can telling the "Truth" create enemies today? (v 16)

## **DO NOT RETURN TO BONDAGE Gal4 : 8-20**

### **Knowing God (vs 8-9)**

Humans have an instinct to worship. Many are ignorant of the true God have turned to imaginary deities – objects, animals and humans. What humans love most, delight in most and worship most is that “godly image”. Ezekiel saw “every form of creeping things, abominable beasts and idols in the house of Israel”. This represented how far Israel had fallen and turned to false gods. The angel of God “has thou not seen what the ancient of the house of Israel do in the dark”. The angel pointed out that the elders felt that God had “forsaken the earth” – they felt abandoned, so they abandoned God in return!! The vision of Ezekiel was the true spiritual condition of Israel at the time of Exile. They worshipped pagan gods whilst a formal adherence to the religion of Jehovah was observed. So they kept the law – but it was meaningless. This is what Paul was warning the Galatians against. It is like the parable of the seeds – some will stay true, but some will go back to their old ways. Some will have a form of Godliness – but not exercise the power they possess.

### **Turning Back (vs 10-20)**

Some Galatian Christians had sought to secure divine favour by following the Jewish traditions, so that they were relevant to the non-believing Galatians. Paul was concerned that the Galatian Christians would make a mockery of the Christian faith and would render Paul's teaching and support as a waste. Paul was not condemning order and beauty in worship - but he was warning against reliance on ceremonies which robs the Christian believer of their spiritual liberty. Paul pleaded with the Galatian Christians to listen and take on board what he was saying – he warned against the zealous people trying to impress the Galatian Christians to follow their way of thinking. Paul warned the Galatian Christians that those people were up to no good and would destroy their faith. Paul was in anguish just thinking about how far the Galatian Christians had fallen and he desired to be present with them, as a father would be their to guide his Children.

# FREE BY GOD'S PROMISE



Gal 4 : 21-31

## **Two Sons of Abraham** (vs 21-25)

- What promise (in vs 23) is Paul discussing in verses 21-25?

## **Freedom of Jerusalem** (vs 26-27)

- Verse 26 – What was Paul referring to when he said “Jerusalem which is above”?

## **Children of Promise** (vs 28-31)

- How does Paul describe the heritage of Christians?



## **FREE BY GOD'S PROMISE (Gal 4: 21-31)**

### **Two Sons of Abraham(vs 21-25)**

Paul then draws on a powerful illustration – the two sons of Abraham – Ishmael and Isaac. This powerful illustration cuts to the heart of Paul's argument with the Galatians about the interference of false teachers, who sought to constrain the Galatian Christians by following the Jewish laws in an attempt to earn salvation. The false teachers had based their arguments on being the children of Abraham and keeping the requirements of the Law. Paul then referred to the scriptures and ask both the false teachers and the Galatian Christians what the scripture actually said. By Paul's use of the word "Law", he was referring both to Mosaic law and Jewish Scriptures. Ishmael was born to a slave(Hagar) whereas Isaac was born to Sarah, Abrahams wife. Ishmael was born out of a fleshly desire to make God's word true – but Isaac was God's promise fulfilled. Ishmael represents the work of the flesh which leads to bondage, whereas Isaac represents God's promise which leads to freedom from bondage. All those who depend on works and ritual for their salvation fall under bondage – which is represented by Hagar, the bond woman/slave.

### **Freedom of Jerusalem (vs 26-27)**

“Jerusalem which is above” denotes a spiritual Jerusalem – which achieves the purpose and blessings God intended. It is a foretaste of Heaven. Paul refers to the offspring of the freewoman/wife Sarah. The analogy then leads to those who are converted to Christ are children of the promise. This illustration served to remind the Galatian Christians of their need to believe in Christ. If they started to rely on rituals then they are regressing. Faith in Christ gives them freedom to approach God, as Christ was the ultimate sacrifice and the bridge between man and God.

### **Children of Promise (vs 28-31)**

Paul summarizes his arguments by calling the Galatians to greater faithfulness. They were the children of promise (as Isaac was). Paul calls them to be faithful to Christ. Pursuing Salvation by works is a great temptation, but Salvation comes only by faith in the one (Jesus) who secured it through the cross at Calvary.



## LEARNING POINTS

1. Freed and Adopted by Faith
2. Do not return to Bondage
3. Free by God's Promise

**Golden Text - (Gal 3:29)** If ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs to the promise.



### Conclusions

We are children of the promise. God wants to reveal himself to us as our heavenly father. When we believe in Jesus Christ and appropriate the provisions of Calvary, we are adopted into the family of God. We are not step children, but blood kin.

We must make a choice through faith to belong to the Family of God - knowing that if we confess our sins he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and will cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

## QUESTIONS



- Describe the difference “before faith came”? (23)
- Describe the difference “after faith came”? (25)
- What unifies the body of Christ?
- What are the “basic spiritual principles of this world”
- How are we set free from them?
- Contrast spiritual slavery with sonship
- Why and how do some people return to bondage?
- Describe Paul's love for the Galatian believers (v 15 & 19)
- What was Paul's great concern? (v 11)
- How can telling the “Truth” create enemies today? (v 16)
- What promise (in vs 23) is Paul discussing in verses 21-25?
- Verse 26 – What was Paul referring to when he said “Jerusalem which is above”?
- How does Paul describe the heritage of Christians?







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## THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

“Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ have made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage”

Galatians 5:1

