

# Heirs of God

Galatians 3.26-4.7 ~ May 22, 2011

- **v26 “sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus”**
  - “*sonship*” for us comes only through adoption
    - it does not come through blood
    - Jesus is God’s only begotten Son
  - So we cannot lord our position over one another
    - Discrimination in mixed families: older brother adopted - servant
    - Discrimination in story of Cinderella
  
- **v27a “baptized into Christ”**
  - In **v26-27** faith and baptism are equated
  - “*Does this mean that baptism saves?*” ~ No . . .
  - **Read 1 Pet 3.21** ~ This is regeneration (*of which baptism is a type*)
  
- **v27b “have put on Christ”**
  - The image is one of putting on clothing
    - new clothes are often uncomfortable
    - we prefer the old clothes ~ they’re more comfortable
    - the more we wear new clothes the more comfortable they become
    - Paul repeatedly tells us to put off the old and put on the new
  
- **No differences between us regarding salvation (v28)**
  - this list of contrasts could be much longer
    - neither preacher nor hearer      neither teacher nor student
    - neither general nor private      neither employed nor unemployed
    - neither giant nor midget      neither beauty nor beast
  - it rejects a caste system regarding believers
  - Imagine the people of Omaha sorted by every category
    - height, weight, beauty, ability, net worth, work ethic, etc...
  - Nothing we can imagine factors into how God views us . . .
    - 6 degrees of separation ~ With God there is only 1 degree
      - For God there is only one discriminator
      - Those that have bowed the knee to Christ and those that have not

*Xition: But what about Paul’s specific examples?*

➤ v28a ~ “Neither Jew nor Greek . . . slave nor free . . . male nor female”

- neither Jew nor Greek ~ nationality (Mexican nor American)
- neither slave nor free ~ societal status (white collar / blue collar)
- neither male nor female ~ sexual role (all have equal access to God)
- This directly challenges common saying of Jewish men
  - “I thank God that I was not born a Gentile, a slave or a woman”

➤ Paul’s contrasts . . .

- Jew vs. Greek
  - Nationalities consider themselves superior ~ Hutus & Tutsis (Rwanda)
    - The Jews were not exempt from this ~ probably worse
- slave vs. free
  - Aristotle called slaves “*animated implements*” or “*breathing tools*”
- male nor female
  - Josephus misinterpreted the Law when he said
    - “*the woman, so says the law, is inferior in all things to man*”

➤ But differences do exist . . .

- The stated goal of socialists/communists is to eliminate all differences
- Slaves and masters still exist
  - we’re born into different roles and must seek contentment in them
- Distinctions between men and women remain
- But we must rise above our circumstances
  - “*godliness with contentment is great gain*” ~ 1Tim 6.6
  - “*I’ve learned in whatever state I am, to be content*” ~ Php 4.11
  - “*do one’s duty in the station in which God has placed us*” ~ Luther
  - Friday “runner” at Millington NAS as a Lance Corporal (E3)
- But again, “*our differences are unrelated to our status before God*”

➤ v28b ~ “For you are all one in Christ Jesus”

- This doesn’t mean we’re all identical replicants
  - Monsters and Aliens ~ Gallaxhar clones
- It means we complement one another
- Collectively we form a single body
  - we are each unique but together form one thing
  - Mona Lisa picture consisting of many smaller pictures

- **v29 ~ “if you are Christ’s, you are Abraham’s seed”**
  - Being sons of God means we are also sons of Abraham
    - All sons of God must also be sons of Abraham ~ sons through faith
  - This means we are also included in the promise
  
- **v1 ~ Young heir “does not differ . . . from a slave”**
  - Children don’t initially perceive class distinctions in one another
  - Our perceptions of this experience may differ
    - Some of us may think of spoiled little rich kids
    - A more appropriate picture is found in George MacDonald’s books
      - *“The Princess and the Goblin”, “The Princess and Curdie”*
        - ◆ The king is righteous and capable, but busy
        - ◆ The princess is obedient, yet inexperienced and in training
  
- **v2 ~ “until the time appointed by the father”**
  - The law served this function until the coming of Christ
    - It served as a tutor to train us and make us humble
    - Yet privileged children can become spoiled and self-centered
    - They can believe themselves better than others
  - Yet Christ came and it was revealed that all true sons are adopted
    - The Jews prided themselves as being **“sons of Abraham”**
    - Yet they were not sons ~ they were not adopted ~
  
- **v3 ~ As children “we were in bondage under the elements of the world”**
  - What does “elements of the world” mean? ~ odd phrase
    - some regard this as black magic, superstitions and such
    - others regard it as what the unsaved commonly do to appease God
      - that man can and must somehow earn God’s favor
      - this is somewhat logical given a recognition of our position
  - Our consciences were designed for this purpose
    - Our consciences condemn us for our evil thoughts and deeds
    - But good works cannot free us from this condemnation
  - God frees believers from this function of the conscience
    - Our consciences instruct and inform us concerning behavior
      - An unbeliever’s conscience condemns him for past and guides him
      - But a believer’s conscience cannot condemn him ~ it can guide him
      - Hurdles: Ahead of us and behind us

- **v4a ~ “But when the fullness of time had come...”**
  - Again, what does this mean “the fullness of time”?
    - Ultimately, it points out a timing of which only God is aware
  - Practically we can point to a few facts concerning that time
    - 1) the use of the Greek language throughout the civilized world
    - 2) the presence of Jewish synagogues throughout that same area
    - 3) the network of Roman roads that connected that large area
    - 4) the presence of Roman law throughout that area
  
- **v4b ~ “God sent forth His Son”**
  - Jesus, as a Son, differs from all other sons in His origin
    - We describe Him as having been eternally begotten
  - The Father “sent forth” His Son
    - This phrase highlights the divine pre-existence of Jesus
  
- **v4c ~ “born of a woman, born under the law”**
  - These two phrases highlight His humanity
  - They reference his qualifications to propitiate our sins
    - animals couldn’t do it ~ they weren’t man’s equal
  
- **v7 ~ “an heir of God through Christ”**
  - **v2** ~ At “the time appointed by the Father”
    - God sent the Holy Spirit to draw you to Himself
  - We have been made joint heirs with Christ
    - This is not sometime in the future – but now – here and now
    - God has freed His children from the bondage and guilt of sin
    - For freedom Christ has made you free . . .
  - **Read Col 2.13 to 3.17**
  - **1 Cor 2.9** ~ “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him.”
  
- **Our spirit cries out “Abba, Father!”**
  - Paul switches to the singular in **verses 6 and 7** ~ “you” and “your”
  - Salvation is ultimately personal for Him and for us . . .
  - Do not wait until heaven to enjoy your inheritance ~ God gives it now . . .

## Let’s Pray