

“God Sent Forth His Son”
Galatians 4:1-5
(Preached at Trinity, March 10, 2013)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. At the beginning of this chapter Paul is continuing to describe the Roman custom of the pedagogue.
Under Roman law a young boy was put under the control of a pedagogue; a trustee selected by the father. This was normally one of the father’s trusted slaves. This pedagogue would oversee the child’s training and would also serve as a disciplinarian. This lasted until the child reached the age of 14. Although the child was a son and an heir he had no power over his life. He was deprived of his inheritance until the time appointed by his father.
Galatians 4:1 NAU - "Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything,"
2. When the child came of age he was able to exercise the full expression of his position as the father’s heir.
This is the picture Paul wants to see of our condition under the Law. Paul said in **Chapter 3:**
Galatians 3:23-25 NAU - "But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. ²⁴ Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith. ²⁵ But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor."
3. “Faith” describes the contrast between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant; between Law and grace.
4. Here in **Chapter 4** Paul is describing God’s ultimate revelation of His promise in Christ.
 - A. At the right time, the fixed time, the appointed time—when the fullness of time had arrived God sent forth His Son. Christ would come as the full revelation of God’s promise of grace.
 - B. He came at a time appointed by the Father.
God determined the precise moment for Christ to come. It was the precise moment that the fullness of God’s promise would be revealed and accomplished. Nothing is left to chance with God. He is perfectly carrying out His eternal purpose—to redeem His people that they might be adopted as His dear children.
5. This morning I want us to direct our attention to God’s great fulfillment of His eternal purpose in redeeming His elect. At the appointed time He sent forth His only begotten Son. Jesus came according to purpose. He came to save His people from their sin.

- I. This is one of the great mysteries of the universe – God sent forth His Son
- A. As we consider the Trinity we find no divisions in God – He is One God
1. LBC Chapter 2:1 – *“The Lord our God is but one only living and true God.”*
 2. As we consider the Trinity we must remember the unity of God. God is one. There aren’t three Gods. God doesn’t have parts or divisions. Yet, this one God exists in three distinct persons.
 3. Each of the three persons is equal in his attributes and nature, but differ in how they relate to the world and to each other. Theologically we use the words Ontological Trinity and Economic Trinity.
 - a. The Ontological Trinity describes what God is—the being of God. From ὄντος, the participial form of the Greek word “to be” - εἶμι It is God as He exists in three persons – the nature and attributes of God. LBC 8:2 *Of Christ the Mediator* – “The Son of God, the second person in the Holy Trinity, being very and eternal God, the brightness of the Father’s glory, of one substance and equal with Him, who made the world, who upholds and governs all things He has made. . .”
 - b. The Economic Trinity describes the *function* of the individual persons of the Godhead and how they interact with each other. One of the definitions of “Economy” is *“The orderly interplay between the parts of a system or structure.”*
- B. As we consider the eternal existence of the Godhead we see a picture of perfect eternal harmony, equality, and oneness. God existed in the fullness of His Divine being.
1. They shared in perfect glory, majesty, splendor, and harmony
John 17:1 NAU - "Jesus spoke these things; and lifting up His eyes to heaven, He said, "Father, the hour has come; glorify Your Son, that the Son may glorify You"
John 17:5 NAU - "Now, Father, glorify Me together with Yourself, with the glory which I had with You before the world was."
 2. They shared in perfect, infinite, eternal love
 - a. To understand this eternal transaction between the Father and the Son demands comprehending the infinite love the Father and the Son had for each other.
 - b. The love between the Father and the Son was in harmony with their perfect union and harmony with each other. There was perfect fellowship. There was a perfect filial relationship between the Father and Son.
 The Father declares of His Son
Matthew 3:17 NAU - "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased."
 - c. In the eternal Covenant of Redemption the Father looked upon His beloved Son, the Son of His infinite love and declared to Him, “You must lay down your life for the people I have chosen to love.”

3. This is at the heart of God sending forth His Son. He sent forth His beloved Son.
- C. Surely this demonstrates the height of God's love for us
1. John writes in the third chapter of his Gospel
John 3:16 NAS - "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son"
 - a. Literally we could read it, "For in this manner God loved the world."
 - b. In what manner did God love the world? He loved it to such a degree that He was willing to send forth His only Son whom He loved for all eternity
 2. As I expressed last week, God looked upon us while we were polluted in our sin and chose to redeem us by sacrificing His own Son
Ephesians 2:4-7 NAU - "But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶ and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."
- II. That God "sent forth His Son" is also a declaration of the eternity of Christ
- A. When you and I were conceived we had a beginning.
1. We went from no being to being. Jesus had no beginning. He was sent forth from where He was before.
 2. Jesus existed in eternity with God and as God
 - a. Mark and Luke begin with the birth of Jesus
 - b. John, however, begins with His eternity.
John 1:1 – "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² The same was in the beginning with God."
John 1:18 – "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*."
 - c. When John declares, "In the beginning was the Word" he is taking us back to **Genesis 1:1**
 At the beginning before creation Jesus was there. In fact Paul says in Colossians 1
Colossians 1:15-17 NAU - "He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. ¹⁶ For by Him all things were created, *both* in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities-- all things have been created through Him and for Him. ¹⁷ He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together."

3. There was a time when there was nothing but God in the fulness of His triune perfection – the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. All were active in creation. All were a part of God’s perfect eternal plan of redemption. **Psalm 90:2** – “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou *art* God.”
 4. Jesus, the eternal Son, had no beginning.
Jesus has His being in Himself
He is self-existent, self-sustaining, self-sufficient, self-determining self-sustaining. God needs nothing outside of Himself
- B. In one of the great mysteries Jesus was eternally in the bosom of the Father
John 1:18 NAU - "No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained *Him*."
1. The Father and Son were eternally the delight and pleasure of each other. They shared a perfect love, a perfect fellowship – nothing but pure delight.
 2. **Proverbs 8:30** is one of the rich Messianic Passages
Proverbs 8:30 – “Then I was by him, as one brought up *with him*: and I was daily *his* delight, rejoicing always before him;”
- C. Again, we find the essence of the Covenant of Redemption
1. In the eternal covenant the Father pledged to give His elect people to His Son and Jesus agreed to come and take upon Himself the likeness of human flesh and die for those whom the Father had given Him.
John 6:39 – “And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”
 2. Jesus was sent forth to do the will of the Father
John 5:30 NAS - "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me."
John 6:37-39 NAU - "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. ³⁸ "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. ³⁹ "This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day."
 3. We also find in the word “sent” the idea of one vested with Divine authority – the eternal Son was sent. There is a grand sense of mission.
- III. Jesus was “sent” but He was also born - "God sent forth His Son, born of a woman"
John 1:14 – “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”
- A. This is also a great mystery—that the eternal Son of God was born.
1. It was not the beginning of Jesus being the Son of God but the beginning of Jesus as the child of the woman.
Jesus took upon himself the full nature of a man.

2. The incarnation was the full act of the entire Trinity
The Father sent forth His Son – The H.S. knitted Jesus in Mary’s womb
Yet Jesus alone became flesh.
John Flavel says it’s like three sisters making a garment that only one would wear.
 3. Jesus was born as a baby with all of the qualities of a human being.
 - a. “Born of a woman” is an expression that can refer to any normal birth. It was used of John the Baptist
Luke 7:28 NAU - "I say to you, among those born of women there is no one greater than John"
 - b. Paul is declaring that Jesus was fully human. Mary conceived Him and gave birth to Him. He cried and nursed. The Bible tells us he grew in wisdom and stature.
And at the fullness of time He gave up His life.
 4. We are not to assume that there was some mutation of God into flesh. Rather, Jesus assumed flesh. He never ceased being God. He never divested Himself of His deity.
 5. This frail baby was God! All of creation should have bowed in the presence of His majesty. Listen to the angels singing praises to their King
Luke 2:13-14 - “And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, ¹⁴ Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”
 6. God had taken upon Himself the nature of a man while maintaining His divine nature!
- B. But this baby did not have an earthly father
1. Paul does not hint of the virgin birth in this verse. Again, the expression “born of a woman” can just refer to any birth.
 2. But I think Paul means more here.
 - a. Paul doesn’t merely say, "But when the fullness of the time came, Jesus was born of a woman"
He says - "God sent forth His Son"
 - b. We’ve already seen that the eternity of Christ is implied – He was sent by the Father. The eternal Son did not enter Mary’s womb through ordinary generation but by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 3. Why is this statement necessary?
 - a. Because I think Paul is stressing His sinless perfection. This statement seems irrelevant unless you apply it to the next clause: “born under the Law.” Jesus was sinless in every way.
 - b. It was necessary for Jesus to come into this world as a perfect man. It was necessary for Him to be sinless in every way. All men are born in sin except for Christ. If Adam’s sin is passed down through the man then the virgin birth is significant.
He was conceived of the Holy Spirit, thus free from original sin.
He was made under the Law and fulfilled it perfectly

- c. He came to be our substitute, the perfect Lamb of God, and to save us from our sins
Matthew 1:21 – “And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.”

Conclusion:

1. Jesus came according to God’s perfect plan and He came at the perfect time to accomplish all that He was determined to accomplish.
2. He went to the cross as our perfect substitute.
3. What effect does this Christ have upon your life?
Matthew 22:42 KJV - " What think ye of Christ?"
4. Have you trusted Him? Are you living for Him?