

Galatians 3:26

- Sons of God
- Through faith in Christ Jesus. Not merely faith in something, but faith in truth which is Christ Jesus is the way to God

Galatians 3:27

- Baptized into Christ is a passive verb which means it was done to us. This refers to the entry level of Christianity. We were brought into Christ. This is our new spiritual position. We are sons of God because we are in Christ, the Son of God.
- Since we are baptized into Christ positionally, then we have clothed ourselves with Christ. This refers not to putting clothes on from outside onto our body, but to putting on the nature of Christ onto our bodies (or, our life, actions, behavior, etc.) from the inside. The positional reality (spiritual) becomes the temporal (physical) reality in our lives.

Galatians 3:28

- Now for all of us in Christ there is no distinction in rights, privileges, advantages, salvation, etc.
- The physical nature or physical distinctions do not play a role in Christ: no national distinction, no social standing or no male/female. Jews do not have an advantage, so there is no sense in trying to become Jewish or following Jewish culture to gain an advantage. Rich people do not have special access to God. Likewise God does not communicate more with men than women, or vice versa.

Galatians 3:29

- But, what does matter is that in Christ you do have this advantage: Believers have gained access to the promise given around 2000 BC to Abraham.
- Why is this important in this letter? Because, the Judaizers had convinced the believers that the full benefits of the Abrahamic covenant could only be accessed if the Mosaic Law was kept.
- Paul had already taught that the Promises given to Abraham had been given to Abraham's "seed" singular and that seed was Christ. (Galatians 3:16, 19) And, since we as believers are "in Christ" we have access to those promises given to Abraham. Paul calls us "Abraham's seed"...notice the singular seed of Christ also refers to the plural many who are in Christ!
- Paul's point will have several points of applications:
 - Basically, Paul's Gospel is right and the Judaizer's Gospel is wrong, off point and distracting.
 - Why strive through the Law to get what you already have by faith by being in Christ.
 - The Law of Moses is going to distract you from what Christ has done and from the potential of your position.
 - You are already heirs, so the biggest problem you have is to miss what is already yours! Abandon the Judaizer's teaching...now!!

Galatians 4:1-7 connects the spiritual truth to Paul's illustration of the under aged son being trained by the slave/guardian until the son reaches the age of maturity and is adopted as a mature son who receives his rights as heir of the estate.

Galatians 4:1

- "heir is a child" – "child" is *nepios* meaning "infant" or "minor"
- The "child," or the son, owns the whole estate, but still only has similar rights to the slave that oversees his training. In a sense the son as a minor has less freedom and fewer rights than the slave who has enough freedom and rights to fulfill his responsibility.

Galatians 4:2

- Subject to
 - "guardians" – *epitropos* – the one who has charge of the child and preparing the heir
 - "trustees"- *prothesmia* – the manager of the household that the child will inherit
- "until the time set by his father" – this phrase is *prothesmias*, an Athenian legal term which was the time that terminated the child's status as a minor. This refers to the Roman practice under Roman law where the child was under the guardians until the time set by the father. At the annual festival on March 17 the child was officially adopted by the father.
 - In Judaism a boy became a man at the age of 12
 - In Greek culture a boy passed from the care of his father to the care of the state at age 18.
 - But, in Roman culture, the father set the time when he would adopt his son. The Son would then receive the *toga virilis*, or the white toga of manhood" in place of the toga *praetexta*

Galatians 4:3

- “the basic principles of the world”, or “the elements of the world,” the Greek word **stoicheia** the meaning of this phrase has been widely debated. There are a few basic options to choose from:
 1. The letters of the alphabet as the elements of speech, but not the written characters. This would be applied to the elementary stages of religious experience common to all men.
 - a. This word is used in Hebrews 5:12 – “In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God’s word all over again. You need milk, not solid food!”
 - b. Paul would have been referring to the elemental phases of religion for both the Jew and the Gentile. This is hard to accept for it would include Paul giving recognition to the pagan rituals as foundational in the development of Christianity. This view would not be supported by his teaching in Romans 1.
 2. The elements from which all things have come, the material causes of the universe. **Stoicheion** is used by Peter in this way in:
 - a. 2 Peter 3:10, “The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire.”
 - b. 2 Peter 3:12, “That day will bring about the destruction of the heavens by fire, and the elements will melt in the heat.”
 3. The heavenly bodies, either because:
 - a. They are the basic parts of the heavens,
 - b. They cause the events in man’s life and cause man’s basic destinyThis would make sense and a connection to the use of the word **stoicheion** in
 - i. Galatians 4:9 since it is followed by Paul’s rebuke of “special days,...months,...seasons and years” in 4:10.
 - ii. Colossians 2:8 also uses **stoicheion** which is again followed by Paul’s similar rebuke in Colossians 2:16 of “religious festival, a New Moon celebration...a Sabbath day.”
 4. Paul is referring to the Law of Moses. This view is consistent with Paul’s earlier teaching concerning the law holding us in bondage. The difficulties are:
 - a. It would not apply to the Gentiles which are included in this discussion.
 - b. Why would Paul say, “of the world,” if he were talking about “of Israel?”
 5. The Greek word **stoicheia** can mean “elements” as well as “alphabet,” or “basic principles.” This word is used the way we refer to chemistry and the elements that make up the universe. The ancient world had four elements: earth, fire, air, water. These had been expanded in the days of Rome to include: the sun, moon, stars, planets. The connection to this verse comes when we understand that each of these was associated with a god, or a demon. These “gods” controlled the calendar and were associated with feast and celebration. Paul is referring to the bondage or slavery to the practice of demon worship and a lifestyle dictated by beliefs and superstitions produced by these pagan gods. This view is supported by the following reasons:
 - a. Galatians 4:8, “Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.”
 - b. Galatians 4:9, “those weak and miserable principles (**stoicheia**).”
 - c. Galatians 4:10, “You are observing special days and months and seasons and years.”
 - d. Eph. 6:10-13, shows Paul’s world view included a conflict of interest, values, and priorities with demons.
 - e. Colossians 2:8 – “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles (elemental spiritual forces, or **stoicheia**) of this world rather than on Christ.”
 - f. Colossians 2:20-22 – “Since you died with Christ to the elemental spiritual forces (**stoicheia**) of this world, why, as though you still belonged to the world, do you submit to its rules: ‘Do not handle! Do not taste! Do not touch!’? These rules, which have to do with things that are all destined to perish with use, are based on merely human commands and teachings.”

So, to be in Christ means to be free from bondage to:

- **if you are Jewish**, to be free from bondage to the Mosaic Law
- **if you are a Gentile**, to be free from the bondage to the demonic forces of false religions

Galatians 4:4

- “when the time had fully come” refers to the Roman practice of the fathers setting a time for the adoption of their son into a mature state of sonship and heir of the estate.
 - Psalm 2 → 2:6, “I have installed my King on Zion, my holy hill.”
→ 2:7, “You are my Son; today I have become your Father. Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession.”
 - Matthew 3:17, “...the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, ‘This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.’ ”
 - Acts 1:9, “After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.”....Acts 2:32-35, “God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: “Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet.”’ Therefore, let all Israel be assured of this: God has made (or, appointed) this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.” (Read on about repenting, baptizing and receiving the promise which is the Holy Spirit in Acts 2:38-41)
 - Hebrews 1 about the sonship and exaltation of Jesus as the heir which is followed by Hebrews 2:1, “We must pay more careful attention therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away.”

Galatians 4:4 says that the reason “God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law

Galatians 4:5 states the reason God:

1. “sent his Son”
2. “born of a woman”
3. “born under law”

God sent his Son as a under-aged man, still under the guardianship of the Law of Moses to:

1. “Redeem those under the law...” or, to redeem from the law
2. “...that we might receive the full rights of sons.” Or, to redeem to sonship.

In Christ’s exaltation from being a man under the law to the glorified Son of God, we who are in Christ have also been placed in position to “receive the full rights of sons.”

Galatians 4:6 - What are the “full rights of sons”? Answer: “God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts” this Spirit “calls out” (meaning is “a loud, earnest, public announcement”) to God “Abba, Father.”

Galatians 4:7 - The point here is we are not making a loud, public announcement that we are slaves, we are in bondage, we are under aged children following elementary religious rituals. We are sons managing the estate we are the heirs of and of which we were left in charge. We do this by the power and presence of the Holy Spirit which was part of our inheritance mentioned in Galatians 3:14, “...so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.”

Now, read Acts 1:8,

“It is not for you to know the times and dates the Father has set by his own authority.

But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses...”

Notice:

1. There are other dates the Father has set for further advancement in the estate.
2. When our adoption is completed with the ascension of Jesus Christ into full sonship, we will receive the Holy Spirit which will empower us to manage the part of the estate we have been assigned to manage as sons of God. We are to be witnesses...
3. In Matthew 28:18-20 Jesus has been given “all authority” in agreement with his adoption as the Son over God’s estate. His followers are to make disciples of all the nations, but he gives them a three step process:
 - a. **Baptize them** – they must be in union with the Godhead, this is not simply a social institution empowered by under aged sons in the power of their own flesh, ignorance, legalism and emotions. And, this means more than dunking them in water (which in itself can be a religious ritual void of reality). This means get born again, get saved, get in union with the Godhead through faith in Jesus Christ.
 - b. **Teaching them everything** – once in union (baptized) with the Godhead they need to renew their mind, need to learn, need to know about what is going on. There’s no way to understand or play the game if you do not know the fundamentals. *Imagine a little league BB game!?!?*
 - c. **Discipleship** – fully trained sons performing their duties as heirs of the estate.

