

Question:
Where Are We Now? (VII)

Gal.4:1-7 concludes chapter 3

Galatians foolishly trade eternal salvation
for spiritual bondage

I. Slaves or Sons? 4:1-7

3:27-29

- Who would trade sonship for slavery? ?
- Paul exposes Galatian folly: they gave up the privilege of being 'Abraham's heir' (29b) to become slaves in spiritual poverty.
- Even more, they rejected privilege of belonging to Christ (3:29) to join the supporters of satan.

Chapter 4:

1:

- Heir (3:29) is not a possessor, but only an expectant possessor
- As long as he is a child – OT period
- “Does not differ from a slave” – 3:23, under the law = imprisoned until faith came (3:25)
- “Though he is master of all” –
 - Yet he controls / possesses nothing
 - Lk.12:42, faithful steward
 - Lk.16:1
 - Ro.16:23

2a:

- Under guardians: manager, foreman, steward.
- How many children would get their shots if parents did require it?
- Joash, 2 Chr.22-24, age 7

2b:

- Under stewards: manager of household or estate

2c:

- Until the time appointed by father
 - Liberty comes with 'majority'
 - Athens: age 18 + 2 years emancipation
 - Rome: tutelage lasted till 25th year
 - Israel: 13 years + 1 day for boys . . .
12 years + 1 day for girls

Who would give up
this liberty for bondage?

3:

- Even so, we...in bondage (enslave, 8)
 - Ac.15:10 ... Mt.11:29-30 ... Gal.2:4
 - Young heirs served inferiors. OT believers served people beneath them. What child wants this to be permanent??

3:

- Under elements of the world
 - Things placed side by side in a row, as letters, ABC's
 - First lesson: rudiments. ABC's – elements of words / sentences... 2 Pt.3:10-12
 - Greeks: earth, water, air, fire

4a:

- Fullness of time. Ep.1:10
 - God controls history. Dn.2. Mk.1. 1 Co.10.
 - No new dispensation will appear till Christ comes as Avenger and Judge.
 - Till then, the 'ends,' being many, include various successive periods. Hb.9:26

4a:

- Fullness of time includes
 1. Universal government (Rome)
 2. Peace (Roman)
 3. Greek language
 4. Roads / travel
 5. Commerce
 6. Dispersion of Jews – Ac.2, 11...
 7. Growing disregard for idols (Ac.17; 19)
 8. Papyrus

4b:

- God sent His Son [to send on a mission]
 - Born of a woman. Hb.2:14
 - Born under the law. Ro.3:23. 2 Co.8:9

5a:

- To redeem those who were under the law: deliver, liberate ... those under law.
 - Why? Because law can't save.

5b:

- That we might receive the adoption as sons
 - Graeco-Roman legal device: wealthy man makes young slave a son and heir. 1 Jn.3:1

Through Jesus they pass from servants to sons. He came to deliver us from greatest evil, and to crown us with greatest blessings.

- 2 Sm.9, Mephibosheth

6:

- Because you are sons (3:26) God has sent for the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!' Mk.14:36
 - Son promised Holy Spirit. Through His revelation, we become sons... (3:27)
 - First, term of endearment; later, title and personal name.
 - Ro.8:15, you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

7:

- No longer a slave but son...if son, then heir of God through Christ.
- Jn.3:16, God so loved...
 - Slave is not a son; a son is an heir.
- Ro.8:17 if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.
- [Do Galatians realize what they have done?]

I. Slaves or Sons? 4:1-7

II. Truth or Consequences? 4:8-11

8:

- But then... (their past)...
- You did not know God (served non-gods)
 - 1 Co.10:20, things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons
 - Ps.115:3-8

9:

- But now... after you have known God (rather are known by God) – how could you turn again ...??
 - They turned back to **weak** [incapacity] ...
 - And **beggarly** elements [poor, impotent, dependent on others; no spiritual worth]

The law is weak and poor, the sinner is weak and poor: two feeble beggars trying to help each other. They cannot do it.

- Luther

9:

- They wish again to be in bondage [= slavery]
 - Hb.7:19
 - Old law can convict, but not forgive; diagnose, not save; sentence to eternal punishment, but not set them free

10:

- You observe days ...
 - Sabbath, Ex.20
 - Months, new moon, Lv.23: 24
 - Seasons, Passover, Pentecost, Booths
 - Years, sabbatical years, Lv.25:1-7
 - Jewish days cannot save them
 - Pagan elements cannot save them

11:

- I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain
 - Apostasy takes them back to their lost condition before they learned the truth
 - Afraid: consequences of apostasy: eternal (2:2, 21)
 - In vain: to no purpose. 3:4.
 - 1 K.19:10, 14.

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III. Contrast With the Past 4:12-15

12:

- Brethren – will they remain so...?
- I urge you to become like me...for I became like you
 - Paul, a Jew, gave up the legal system
 - In Galatia, Paul lived as a Gentile (2:14).
1 Co.9:19-21
 - Ac.13:38-39
- You have not injured me at all

13:

- You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first
 - Theories
 - Malaria (13)
 - Epilepsy (14)
 - Ophthalmia (15) ... 16

14:

- And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject – [spit out (defense against illness)]. Disdain, disgust.
 - They received him (gospel)
 - They once had every reason to turn away from him, but did not
 - Now, without reason, they turn away
 - But you received me as an angel of God
 - Even as Jesus Christ
 - Climax: deity of Christ. Mt.10:40

15:

- What then was the blessing you enjoyed?
 - They had blessed Paul for his gospel of salvation. Through him they were saved.
 - If possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes . . . Mt.5:29
 - Now they despise their own souls

Galatians 3

- Paul surveys 2000 years of O.T. history, highlighting the relation between three great figures of biblical history – Abraham, Moses, Christ

Galatians 4

- Paul uses this history to contrast the Galatians' condition under the law (1-3) with their condition in Christ (4-7)
 - 8-11: once we were slaves; now, sons
 - How could we turn back to slavery? Ex.14