

Our Inheritance In Christ

Passage: Galatians 3:26-4:7 | Speaker: Steve Grothoff | Date: 261004

SUMMARY

Steve Grothoff continues the Galatians series in 3:26-4:7, moving from justification to adoption. Believing facts about Jesus is not the same as believing in him, and God is not only our judge but our Father who adopted us. Baptized into Christ, we have put on Christ, all are one in him, and so we are heirs according to the promise. The law was a tutor until the fullness of time. The first gift of the inheritance is the Holy Spirit, and the inheritance itself is imperishable, unfading and kept in heaven: eternal life with God.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- God is not only our judge who acquits us; he is our Father who adopted us and loves us personally.
- There is a difference between believing facts about Jesus and believing in him; even Satan agrees with much that is true.
- In Christ there is no distinction between believers, so petty divisions over preferences should not separate God's family.
- The law was a tutor until Christ came; as heirs we now have the Holy Spirit and his fruit guiding us.
- Our inheritance is imperishable, unfading and kept in heaven, so we fix our eyes on what is eternal and live to glorify him.

Introduction

All right, we are back into Galatians.

Thank you guys for all of your support over the last year. And thank you guys for trusting me to be here with you guys for the next few months. So if you all would like to stand, we will go ahead and read through our passage for today and then we will go ahead and get started. We will be in Galatians

3. I'm going to start in 23, backtrack just a little bit and then go to 7.

Scripture Reading: Galatians 3:23-4:7

Galatians 3.23, but before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith, which would afterwards be revealed. Therefore, the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. For you are all sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek. There is neither slave nor free. There is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed and heirs according to the promise. Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father. Even so, we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who are under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. And because you are sons, God has sent forth the spirit of his son into your hearts, crying out, Abba, Father.

Therefore, you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Father, we thank you for your word.

Opening Prayer

We thank you for this time together and just, Father, we thank you for being just that, for being our father.

As we're going to get into that, that that means that we are your children and that you care for us and that you, you love us. And, and at times that also means that, that you discipline us and guide us in the correct direction. So, Father, we thank you. That we are adopted into your family when we accept Christ and when we put our faith in him.

Thank you, Lord, for this time that we get together. And, Father, we just ask that everything that we talk about today will be edifying to each and every one of us. And, Father, that, that they are your words and not mine that are spoken. And we ask all of these things in your son's name. Amen.

All right.

Why Backtrack to Verse 23

I wanted to backtrack just a little bit because it kind of fits in with where we're going. A couple weeks ago, we were in, we were talking about when we were in Galatians 3, the beginning of the chapter, talking about why we had the law, that the law was in place to point us to the need for a savior.

And since Jesus, anyone who has put their faith in him as their savior would be saved. So, this morning, we're going to talk about what it means to not only be justified through our faith in Christ, but also that we are adopted into the family of God as one of his children.

Point 1: God Is Our Father, Not Only Our Judge

So, we're going to cover three different things in this passage. One, God is not only our judge, but he is our father.

Number two, we are adopted as his children and heirs. And three, what are those gifts that we get since we are the heirs of God? An heir implies that there's an inheritance. So, we're going to talk about what the gifts of the father are.

So, we see that God is not only our judge, but he is our father. So, we talked earlier about the law, that there's no amount of good that you can do. There's nothing, no amount of following the rules that you can do that will save you. That the only thing you have is your justification or your salvation that comes through your faith in the person, life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We put our faith in his perfect life, his atoning death, and his miraculous resurrection to pay for each and every one of our sins.

We put our faith in those actions.

Believing vs. Believing In

There's a difference of believing and believing in. They're two completely different things. Think about it this way. If Satan himself walked in here and said, I would like to join your church. And he said, okay, do you believe in Jesus? Absolutely, I believe in Jesus. Do you believe in God? Absolutely, I believe in God. Do you believe that God created everything? Absolutely, I believe that God created everything. You could go down a long list of things that Satan would absolutely agree are true.

And then, you get to the point that makes the big difference. And you say, do you have faith that everything that you have done, that Jesus died for you,

and that because of that, you have been forgiven? And he'd say, no, I don't believe that.

He got 90% of the way and just didn't quite put into that last little bit. But how easy is it for us to fall into that same thing where we say, yeah, I believe in Jesus. Yeah, I believe in God. Yeah, I believe all of those things. But not truly change your life and put your faith in those things. It's easy to do sometimes. And sometimes we get complacent. Sometimes we just get stuck. Look, we are a body of believers. That is another thing that Paul calls us. We are a body of believers. What happens when you sit still for too long? What happens when you don't do anything for a while? Some of the younger people in here are not maybe the two sitting back there. But the rest of us probably understand if you sit still too long, guess what? When you go to get up, your legs are a little stiff. You don't work quite as well because you've been stagnant.

How often is that the case with us that we become stagnant in our faith that we forget exactly how easy it is to get up and move?

Because it isn't anymore. Because we haven't done it for so long. Because we've sat still for too long in our faith and we just don't move.

But it's easy sometimes to forget just how much has been given on our behalf to save us.

Now we talked a couple weeks ago about the justification through faith.

The Law Was Our Tutor

That we are justified through faith. So we have been saved through faith. Our justification is God says you're good in my book. God is our judge. But a judge doesn't have a personal relationship with the person that he acquits of a crime.

A judge forgives it and then moves along in the next one, in the next one. And that's where Paul takes this next step and he goes from God didn't just justify you, God adopted you. He puts one step farther and he says, God is our father. God has adopted us into his family. God has chosen us and adopted us into his family. And he loves and cares for us because we are one of his. Because we are now his.

He takes it one step deeper and says, he doesn't just forgive you of your sins, but he loves you. And he wants what's best for you. We read there in verse 23, 24, and 25 that the law was a tutor. It says that the law was there to point out the things that we were doing wrong. The law was there to guide us when we didn't have Christ. The law was there for that. Paul tells the Romans in Romans 7, 7, he says, I would not have known what covetousness was unless the law had said, do not covet. It points out these are the things that we're doing wrong. It's not there necessarily to condemn us fully, but it's there to help us point us in the right direction. Think about it like this. When you've got kids growing

up, do you tell them not to touch the stove? Do you tell them don't stick the fork in the outlet? Do you tell them don't go play out in the middle of the street when everybody's driving through? Kids don't know these things necessarily. We have to teach them these things because they don't know that these things are wrong. They don't know that these things are harmful.

The law was there for that exact reason. That's why it says the law was our tutor. It was there to guide us. It was there to direct us. These are the things that are okay. These are the things that are not okay.

Point 2: We Are Adopted as Children and Heirs

We are adopted.

So we are his children and we are his heirs. That is our next point. We're in verse 27.

It says, as many of you were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.

Baptized in Christ, put on Christ. There's two different things there. They're both in and of the same, but they both are different. But they both contextually mean something totally different in the same time. In those days, when you transitioned from boyhood to manhood, you changed the type of clothing that you wore. The type of clothing that you wore, it was a different way that you dressed. You dressed differently because you were no longer a boy. You were now a man. That was part of the tradition in the Jewish tradition of the bar mitzvah and bat mitzvah for the girls was part of it was to show, to signify, there's a difference between who you were and who you are now. So when he says, put on Christ, he literally is talking about changing your clothes to signify that you are now a Christian.

Verse 28, it tells us that there is no distinction between believers, that we are all children of God.

No Distinction in Christ

He says there is no longer Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for all are one in Christ Jesus. We're all in Christ Jesus. We are all part of the same body. How often is it that we get divided about things when the truth and the primary thing that we should be focused on is that we are all Christians, that we are all children of God. We're all part of the same family. But so often we get separated. We divide things. Well, I believe this way. You believe this way. I don't think that we're both Christians. I want this kind of music. I want this kind of music. I like when we talk in the Old Testament. I like when we go in the New Testament. I like when we divide ourselves. We're so quick to divide when we really need to stay focused on the one thing that truly matters, that we're all of his sons and daughters. We are all children of God.

Heirs According to the Promise

Verse 29, he says that if we are in Christ, we are also heirs to the inheritance of God. So, we are heirs according to the promise.

Heirs to what? What is that? What are we an heir to?

This returns back, and then in verses 1 through 5, he returns back to that analogy of a tutor or a guardian or a steward.

Galatians 4:1-5: The Guardian and the Heir

He says, a son who is an heir is still under the authority of his guardian until he reaches a certain age, until he reaches manhood. When they, he's talking about the Jewish people at this point, and he says, before we had, pencil there, before we had Jesus, we had the law. The law kept us on track. We needed that to guide us and direct us. But now that we have Christ, we have been, we are past that point. We are, we are now, we are now, we have reached that certain age. We have reached that, that, that maturity, that manhood. That's what he says there in verse 4.

No, I'm sorry. Verse 4, yes, beginning of verse 4. But when the fullness of time had come, that fullness of time had come, here we are. We now no longer are bound by the law. We are now, we are now his children.

Once we've received the part, the point where we have been released from the authority of our guardian, we are now fully able to receive our inheritance.

Point 3: What Is Our Inheritance?

So what is that inheritance? Again, what are the gifts of the Father? What are those things? What are some of those things?

Well, one, as he talks about there in verse 6, one of them is that we receive the Holy Spirit. When we become Christians, when we put our faith in Christ, when we reach out and say, God, I need you, and put our faith in Jesus, one of the first instantaneous things that happens to us is we are now indwelt with the Holy Spirit. And as Paul tells the Romans in chapter 8, that also means that we're free from the indwelling of sin. There's two things that happen there. We are no longer bound by sin because we now have the Holy Spirit to guide us. We now have a conscience, if you will, that is guided by God. We have the angel on our shoulders a little bit louder than the devil on our other shoulder. If you guys remember from the old cartoons,

talking about when he's trying to make a decision and the angel pops up on one side and says something and the devil pops up on the other side and tells him something. The angel gets much louder. And as you've seen in the cartoons, that's usually about the time that he takes his harp and puts an arrow in it and shoots it at the devil and the devil pops. And that's essentially in my mind, in my childlike mind, that's essentially what I see it as whenever we are indwelt with the Holy Spirit. We now have that difference. We have that angel on our side, on our shoulder, that's always there telling us that's okay, that's not okay.

That's the point.

That is the purpose of the Holy Spirit is to be there to guide us because we no longer need the law to guide us. And we'll get into it in a couple of weeks here. Well, in about a month, we'll get into what is the fruit of the Holy Spirit? Later in Galatians, in Galatians 5, 22 and 23, it talks about what the fruit of the Spirit is and that when we have received the Holy Spirit, that we have love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control, people, these are all the things that help us that we don't need the law because we have all of these things and we have the Holy Spirit guiding us.

In verse 7, it says that we are an heir of God through Christ.

Like I said, an heir receives an inheritance. In Ephesians 1, 11,

An Inheritance That Will Not Fade

Paul tells the Ephesians that in Christ we have received an inheritance. And then Peter, in 1 Peter says, tells us that this inheritance will not perish, spoil, or fade, but that this inheritance is kept for us in heaven.

Imperishable. It will not ever decay or be destroyed. It will always be unfading. It's unending and undiminishing. It will be just as glorious the first day as it will be forever.

Unfading. It's unending, undiminishing.

And reserved. It's kept for us in heaven. It's ours. It's been held for us in heaven. So what is it?

What is this inheritance that will never perish, spoil, or fade, but is held for us in heaven? It's our eternal life in the presence of Christ, in the presence of God.

That's what we have. That is our inheritance. That is what, when God tells us, I want you to be my child, that is what God is saying. He says, I want you to spend eternity with me in heaven. And how glorious of a thing is that going to be? We don't even understand. We get small snippets of what

heaven's supposed to look like. And I don't even think, I think one of the main reasons that God doesn't describe heaven a lot is because there's not really a way to describe it in words. There's just not a way. It's just not possible. The things that we hear seem good enough, but the little bit that we get, we just don't quite get how glorious it's going to be.

That's why Paul tells the Corinthians in his second letter to them, he says, this is why we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. Since what is seen is temporary and what is unseen is eternal. We focus on what is to come. We don't focus on today. We focus and we place our hope in what is coming.

In Conclusion

So in conclusion, if you have put your faith in Christ and trust that he died to save you from the punishment of your sins, then you're a child of God. You're saved. You will spend eternity in heaven with him. As his child, you are now an heir to that eternal life. You are now an heir to an eternal life in heaven in his holy presence.

The rest of your life here on earth should be lived out, glorifying him and sharing the good news of the gospel with all his people, with anybody, everybody. Reach out. Talk to people. Reach the lost.

Disciple the saved. I just want to close with this.

J.I. Packer: What Is a Christian?

I have a quote. J.I. Packer was once asked, what is a Christian? For those of you that don't know, J.I. Packer was a theologian and a Bible scholar for many years. And he said, what is a Christian? What is a Christian?

Christians can be described from many angles, but it is clear that we can cover everything by saying this. True Christians are people who acknowledge and live under the word of God. They submit without reserve to the word of God written in the book of truth, believing and believing the teaching, trusting the promises, following the commands.

Their eyes are upon the God of the Bible as their father and the Christ of the Bible as their savior.

Christians will tell you if you ask them that the word of God has both convinced them of sin and assured them of forgiveness. Do you guys realize

God as Father: Old Testament vs. New

that the word father was never used to describe God at all in the Old Testament? Not once.

But that is the only way, one of the main ways, almost exclusively how Jesus describes God. He calls him father.

Just another step deeper. Again, I feel like Paul did this the justification and then the adoption.

The Old Testament was the law. This is what you need. This is what you should be doing. And then the New Testament, this is what God has done for you. God our father.

The difference in being not just forgiven, but having a personal relationship with you.

Challenge for This Week

I would ask you all to think the same thing this week when you get time and when you're in your quiet time with God. What is a Christian to me? What am I? What makes me feel the ability to be able to say that I'm one of God's children? How is that in my life? And reflect on that and spend some time not only praying about that, but thanking God for what He has done in your life. Because each and every one of us can say without a doubt that God has done something in our life that has changed us, that has saved us, that has... Sometimes I can say with all honesty that there are times that I'm glad that God has disciplined me. I am glad that I went through the things that I did because I was not living the way that I should have and God smacked me upside the head if you will with what I should be doing. And I thank God for that because I look on my life and I think where I could be if I hadn't had God. If God hadn't been there for me. If God didn't care about me. If God only forgave me my sins and it was a transaction and that was it. and I just came back to him and said hey I sinned again and he's like okay well there you go you're forgiven. No it's a relationship it's a he loves us and he wants what's best for us.

That's why Romans 8 28

Romans 8:28: Glorifying Him

I say it often and it's one of my favorite verses is all things all things happen for the glory of God and for the good of his people. So if we are his people what are we doing to glorify him?

Closing Prayer

Father we thank you Father we thank you again for your word Father we love you Father we are glad to be called your children we are glad to call you Father Lord thank you for the inheritance that we have of eternal life an inheritance that we don't deserve that we didn't work for but Father that you freely give us Father that you decided before you even created us that you knew that we were going to need saving and you said I'm still going to save them you knew all of the things that we would do all of the ways that we would that we would hurt you all of the ways that we would that we would just not do and live up to the things that you wanted for us but Father you loved us anyways so Father we thank you for that Father we love you and we ask all these things in your son's name Amen

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