COMING OF AGE

**DATE: 9/9/2015 Wed.**

**TEXT: Galatians 4:1-7**

**INTRODUCTION**

We now come to chapter 4

There are 3 sections in this chapter

First Paul speaks to them about their *Birthright* – **vs. 1-7**

Then he speaks to them of their *Betrayal* - **vs. 8-20**

And finally of their *Bondage* – **vs. 21-31**

In chapter 3 Paul used the example of God's Covenant with Abraham as proof that salvation is by Grace through Faith

**Ephesians 2:8, 9 *– “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:”
“Not of works, lest any man should boast”***

In this section he goes on to develop that Truth

Paul uses the Jewish custom of *birthright* or *sonship* as a picture of the Spiritual Adoption of the children of God

Paul draws upon this custom to illustrate our New Relationship with Christ

Adoption today is understood as parents taking a child, who is not theirs by birth, and treating him as their own, giving him all the privileges and rights of the family

While that is indirectly illustrated here, that is not the Just of what Paul teaches (He teaches what is known as Sonship)

It is one thing to be the seed of Abraham; it is an even greater thing to be a son of God

This is the theme of Paul's closing argument in the doctrinal section of his letter

Let’s stand to read **vs. 1-7** and then pray

I’d like to think on this thought tonight

**“Coming of Age”**

Read **vs. 1-7**

**~~~Prayer~~~**

Keep in mind that Paul is continuing to contrast Works and Faith

**I. OUR “POSITION” AS HEIRS – vs. 1-3**

Paul’s Analogy is based on the customary practices of that day

**A. The ‘Practice’ – vs. 1, 2**

***“The heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant” … “but is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father”***

The experience of an immature child is illustrated here

**1.** The *Position* of the Child

An ***“Heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant”***

While young and immature, the child is treated nearly like a servant in that he is under rules and regulations and others tell him what to do

**2.** The *Promotion* of the Child

***“Until the time appointed of the father”***

At an appointed time, the father promotes the child to a mature position in which the child exercises authority and has a higher position in the home than any servant or guardian

**B. The ‘Portrayal’ – v. 3**

***“Even so we, when we were children, (unsaved) were in bondage under the elements of the world:”***

This is the Application of the Analogy (Comparison) made in **vs. 1, 2**

**1.** The *Position* of the Unsaved

The reference here to *children* is to someone not saved

They are ***“in bondage”***

As the immature child is **“*under tutors and governors”***

So the unsaved is in bondage to the **“*elements of the world”***

**Colossians 2:20-22 …**

The Jew was under the Law and its legal enactments

The Gentiles had their observances in pagan religions and idol worship

**2.** The *Promotion* of the Unsaved

Salvation resulted in a change of position for the redeemed

**Ephesians 2:5 *– “Even when we were dead in sins, (He) hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved ;)”***

We will now detail this in our next point

**OUR “POSITION” AS HEIRS**

**II. OUR “PARDON” THROUGH CHRIST – vs. 4, 5**

The Action of Adoption (Pardon – to forgive the guilty)

The Promoting of the immature child to Adulthood Portrays the action of the Gospel in Salvation in changing the Position of the unsaved through redemption

Our Standing Before God

**A. The ‘Period’ – v. 4a**

***“When the fullness of time was come”***

Just as **v.2** says - **“*until the time appointed of the father”***

So the Gospel came at a specific time determined by God

This time is called **“*due time”*** in **Romans 5:6**

***“For when we were yet without strength (lost), in due time Christ died for the ungodly”***

It shows the Sovereignty and Power of God

Satan has greatly opposed the coming of Christ, the work of redemption

But it came about *just as* God planned and *just at the time* He had planned!

**B. The ‘Person’ – v.4b**

***“God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law”***

Christ was made of a woman and made under the Law,

Yet, He was perfect in Keeping and then in Fulfilling the Law

Thus the Source of our Sonship is the True Son, Jesus Christ

Leave Christ out of the Gospel and you have no Gospel

**Ephesians 1:7 –** ***“In Whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace;”***

3 things are said of Christ here

**1.** We see the Coming of Christ **– *“sent”***

This shows His Eternal Existence as Son

This Confirms His Deity

**2.** We see the Creation of Jesus – ***“Made of a woman”***

-- This speaks of His Incarnation

**Philippines 2:8** ***– “And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”***

-- It speaks of His Humanity

***“Made”*** / ***“fashion”*** is not something eternal in the past, but something that had a beginning

He took upon Himself all the attributes of a man

He assumed all the innocent infirmities of our nature

He appeared as other men do, was subjected to the necessity of food and raiment, like others, and was able to suffer, as other men are

He was simply Robed in Flesh, but without the Sin Nature

**3.** The Character of Christ – **“*Made under the law”***

He was born at the Time of the Law

And subject to it

He lived under the Law without failure …

… This qualified Him to be our substitute on the cross

Christ was sinless

**II Corinthians 5:21**- ***“For He (The Father) hath made Him (The Son) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”***

**C. The ‘Process’ – v.5a** (Redemption – *to buy back*)

***“To redeem them that were under the law,”***

The word **“*redeem”*** means literally *to purchase out of the market place*

Specifically - *to buy out of the slave market*

This shows the great price of our Redemption which should motivate us to holy living

**I Corinthians 6:20 – “*Ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit"***

**D. The ‘Product’ – v.5b**

***“that we might receive the adoption of sons”***

This ***“adoption of sons”*** means *coming of age*

It is more than just becoming a child of God

It is becoming an adult son, one who is no longer under bondage as a young child

It is important to see this meaning of Adoption,

For it says Christ delivers us from trying to Work for our Salvation

Hence, Works and Grace do not mix

It is illogical to insist that Works are a part of the Gospel

 In truth, the Gospel frees us from the Works of the Law

 **OUR “POSITION” AS HEIRS**

**OUR “PARDON” THROUGH CHRIST**

**III. OUR “PROVISION” AS SONS – vs. 6, 7**

Two significant Assets (something valuable) are possessed by the person who has received the Adoption of Adult Sonship

**A. The Holy Spirit – v.6**

***“Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father”***

The first great Asset cited here is the indwelling of the Holy Spirit

**1.** The Reception

Because we are saved, God gives us His Spirit

***“Because ye are sons,”*** – *now that you are*

Someone who is truly saved has the indwelling Holy Spirit

**Romans 8:9 – “*If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His”***

**Romans 8:16 – *“The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:”***

**2.** The Relationship

Our new Relationship – **“*Crying, Abba, Father”***

Notice here it is not the believer, but the Spirit that cries out to God

From the moment of His indwelling, the Spirit is crying out to God on our behalf

**Romans 8:26 *– “Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered”***

That’s one way we know we are saved, my old nature would never cry out to God

But praise God, because of our new Relationship with Him we too can cry *“****Abba, Father”***

**Romans 8:15 – *“For (you) ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear;***

***… but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father”***

Not only is there a New Standing as a child of God,

But we also have a New Relationship

The word *“****Abba”*** is the Aramaic word for *Father*

It is similar to the English word *Daddy* or *Papa*

It is a term of endearment used by small children in addressing their fathers

Jesus used this term when praying in the garden of Gethsemane

**Mark 14:36 – *“And He said, Abba, Father, all things are possible unto Thee; take away this cup from Me: nevertheless not what I will, but what Thou wilt”***

It is a term that overflows with the thoughts of love, grace, and compassion

It vividly expresses the personal and intimate Relationship we have with God

Because of God's adoption we are no longer servants bound by legalism but sons enjoying liberty in Christ

**B. Being Heirs – v.7**

***“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ”***

Another significant Asset for being Adopted is the realization of being an Heir

**1.** The Eligibility

***“An heir of God through Christ”***

To be eligible for an inheritance one must be Related

**Romans 8:17 *– “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together”***

Being a Servant (Works) does not qualify one for this inheritance

Being adopted as an adult son is a result of the work of Jesus Christ, not the keeping of the Law

**2.** The Excellency

***“An Heir of God”***

There is no greater place to be

No one has wealth like God

The greatness of Divine wealth cannot be comprehended by the finite mind

It is an inheritance that will exceed all inheritances,

And, guess what?

The world won’t be able to tax it!

**OUR “POSITION” AS HEIRS**

**OUR “PARDON” THROUGH CHRIST**

**OUR “PROVISION” AS SONS**

**CONCLUSION**

To be counted as a son of God is the birthright of every believer

In dealing with believers as minors, Paul is looking at the past and has the Jewish believers particularly in mind

He wants to draw the contrast between the spiritual immaturity of the past and the full maturity and freedom that we now have in Christ

He has already shown the Law, in its roles as schoolmaster, prison guard, and chaperon

He has now compares it to a Legal Guardian

Under the old economy, the believer was a ward of the state, so to speak

His property and his inheritance were in the care of another

All of that is changed in Christ

***“Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ”***

**We have Come of Age!**