

Abba, Father!

Galatians 4:1-7

Key Verse: 4:6

“Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, ‘Abba, Father.’”

1. How did Paul describe people under the law in the Jewish context? (3:23, 25) What new analogy does he use to help the Galatians understand this in their context? (1-2) What was the legal status of children named as heirs of an estate? What were the roles of guardians and trustees?

2. How did Paul apply this to our lives before believing in Jesus? (3,9b) (“Elemental spiritual forces” (basic principles) in Greek is “stoicheion,” which is literally “ABC’s,” and can be applied broadly to conscience, ethics, reason, cause and effect, superstition or religious systems, even including demonic forces; see also Col2:20-23) In what sense did we used to be in slavery to these things?

3. Read verse 4. When and how did Jesus come? What does “God’s set time” imply? What promises of God were fulfilled when Jesus was “born of a woman”? (Ge3:15; 22:18; Isa7:14) Why did God send him in this way? (Jn1:14) Why was he “born under law”? (5a; Lk2:21--24; Mt5:17; Heb2:17)

4. Read verse 5. How miserable was it to be under the law? To release us, what did Christ do? (Ro3:24-25a; Heb9:12) What was his ultimate purpose? (5b) What is the fundamental change in status of an adoptee, and what new privileges are bestowed? How can we experience being adopted into God’s family? (Jn1:12)

5. Read verse 6. What amazing thing happens to us when we are adopted by God? What does it mean to call God “**Abba, Father!**” (Ro 8:15-16) How does this reflect a change in the way God views us, and in the way we relate to him? How is our identity changed? (7) What does it mean to be an “heir”? (Ro8:17; 1 Pe 1:3-4)

6. Review in these verses what wonderful things Christ has done for you. In what ways are you enjoying the blessings and privileges of being adopted as a child of God?