

The Book of Galatians

Lesson 7: Sons of God Through Faith, Baptized into Christ -- Galatians

3:26-4:7

Imagine a child who has lived her whole life in an orphanage, sleeping in a long row of cots, eating at a crowded table, belonging to no one in particular. Then one day a family comes, signs the papers, and takes her home. That night she sleeps in a room that is hers, in a bed that is hers, in a house where a voice down the hall is her father's voice. Nothing about her has changed except everything. She has a name, a place, an inheritance, a family. She is no longer an orphan. She is a daughter.

That is the picture Paul paints in this passage, and it is the warmest stretch in the whole letter. After chapters of hard argument about law and promise, Paul lifts his eyes and tells the Galatians who they have become. In Christ, he says, you are all sons of God. Not servants kept at arm's length, not children under a strict guardian, but full sons and daughters, with all the privileges that belong to the family of God.

And he tells them exactly how it happened. They became sons of God through faith, and he points to the moment that faith laid hold of Christ: as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. In baptism they were clothed with Jesus himself, united to him, brought into the family. The old labels that once divided them, Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, no longer define who belongs. In Christ they are all one.

Then Paul shows the tenderness at the center of it all. God sent his Son to redeem us, and then sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, so that we cry out to God with the most intimate word a child can use: Abba, Father. We are no longer slaves. We are sons and heirs. As we read, let the wonder settle in. The God of the universe has made you his own child and taught your heart to call him Father.

Group Discussion: Paul says that in Christ the old dividing lines of race, class, and status no longer determine who belongs, for "you are all one in Christ Jesus" (3:28). What would it look like for our congregation to live more fully as one family across the lines that usually divide people?

Personal Reflection: Paul says the Spirit moves us to cry "Abba! Father!" (4:6). When you pray, do you come to God as a beloved child to a loving Father, or as a servant to a distant master, and what shapes the difference?

Read Galatians 3:26-4:7

Study Questions

1. Paul declares, “in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith” (3:26). What does it mean to be a son or child of God, and what does this verse teach about how that relationship is received?
2. Paul wants believers to know they are children of God, not servants kept at a distance. Does your daily experience of God match your true status as his beloved child, and where does it fall short of the security and joy that status should bring?
3. Paul says, “as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (3:27). What does it mean to be clothed with Christ, to put him on, and how does that change the way God sees us and the way we are to see ourselves?
4. Paul’s image of putting on Christ implies that there are old garments to take off. What old clothing, old habits, attitudes, or identities, is Jesus calling you to take off so that you can visibly wear him instead?
5. Paul says that in Christ “there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (3:28). What unity does this great verse describe, and what does it not mean, since Scripture elsewhere still gives men and women distinct roles in the church and the home?
6. Paul tears down the walls of prejudice and partiality among God’s people. Where do you notice partiality, prejudice, or a sense of superiority in your own heart, and how does your oneness in Christ confront it?
7. Paul says, “God sent forth his Son ... to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons” (4:4–5). What does the truth of adoption add to our understanding of salvation, beyond forgiveness, and what does it tell us about the heart of God toward us?
8. Paul says the Spirit prompts us to cry “Abba! Father!” (4:6), the cry of intimate trust. What keeps you from relating to God with that kind of closeness, and what would change if you truly believed he welcomes you as a beloved child?
9. Paul says we are “sons of God, through faith,” and immediately adds, “for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ” (3:26–27). How do faith and baptism belong together in coming to Christ, so that we understand baptism as the God-appointed moment when faith is clothed with Christ rather than as a human work that earns salvation, and so that we reject the error of a faith only that leaves baptism aside?
10. Look back across the whole passage. Paul says you are “no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God” (4:7). Name one specific way Jesus is calling you, this week, to stop living like a slave and start living as the free and beloved heir you have become.

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: Romans 8:14–17, the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry Abba, Father; Colossians 3:9–11, putting off the old self and putting on the new; Acts 2:38–41, those

who received the word being baptized and added to the church; 1 Corinthians 12:13, baptized by one Spirit into one body; Ephesians 1:3–6, adopted as sons through Jesus Christ to the praise of God's grace.