

CHRISTMAS

"POWER"

(How Christ's Coming Has Freed Us From Bondage)

Galatians 4:1-7



God's Perfect Timing:

- ◆ The Problem of the Law (V. 1-3)
- ◆ The Plan of the Lord (V. 4)
- ◆ The Purchase of Our Liberty (V. 5)
- ◆ The Provision of a Legacy (V. 6, 7)

"But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law." (Galatians 4:4, 5)

"CHRISTMAS POWER"

How Christ's Coming Has Freed Us From All Bondage

Galatians 4:1-7

Text: "But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law." (V.4)

Introduction

Fact: The Galatians wanted to grow in the Lord, but were going about it in the wrong way.

Fact: They were trying by rites and ceremonies (the Law) to become better Christians.

Fact: They were frustrating the Gospel of Grace and were experiencing bondage instead of freedom.

Fact: They needed to understand the liberating power that Jesus came to bring.

Our Setting

1. Paul had planted churches in Southern Galatia.
2. Paul (on the first of three missionary journeys) traveled hundreds of miles west of Syria into Galatia (known today as Turkey).
3. Paul took Barnabas with him and evangelized four main cities:
 - ◆ Derbe
 - ◆ Lystra
 - ◆ Iconium
 - ◆ Antioch
4. After planting the churches, Paul returned to Syria.
5. Paul then (on his 2nd missionary journey) took Silas with him and returned to the same churches to strengthen the believers.
 - ◆ But shortly after this second visit, the Galatians fell prey to "another gospel". (1:9)

What was this "other gospel"?

- ◆ The Judaizers were leading Paul's converts from grace back into law (from liberty back into legalism).
- ◆ The Galatians were being told that they must grow in the Lord by the power of the flesh. (3:3)
- ◆ They were perverting the Gospel of Grace. (1:7)
- ◆ They were demanding that circumcision, rites and ceremonies be kept to please God.
- ◆ They were promoting spirituality by the means of:
 - What you do.
 - What you do not do.
 - What leader you follow.
 - What group you belong to.

So Paul writes Galatians:

To reveal why the Law was given.

1. It was given to reveal our sin
"Wherefore then serveth the Law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made." (3:19)

2. It was given to prepare the way for Christ's coming.
"Wherefore the Law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith." (3:24)

Questions with answers

1. What was the problem with the Law?
2. How did the Law crowd us to Christ?
3. What happened in the fullness of time?
4. Why was Jesus born of a woman?
5. How does the power of grace enable us to overcome?
6. What's the liberating power of the Christmas message?
7. What difference does it make in your life and mine?

What happened in the fullness of time? Why was Jesus born?

I. The Problem of the Law (V. 1-3)

"Now I say then, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though He be Lord of all." (V.1)

What's the problem here?

1. The Judaizers bewitched the converts in Galatia. (3:1)
2. They tricked them into thinking that the law made them better Christians.
3. They tricked them into measuring their growth by external accomplishments.
4. They tricked them into thinking that they could be spiritual by the power of rites and ceremonies (instead of the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit).

Paul illustrates the problem. The analogy is clear.

(V.1) "The heir as long as he is a child differeth nothing from a servant."

Fact: No matter how wealthy a father may be, his infant son could not enjoy his inheritance.

Fact: One day it will be his, but he cannot enjoy it now.

Fact: The son may be the legal heir, but until he comes of age, he must continue to take orders from his guardian.

"He is under tutors and governors." (V. 2)

Question: Who were the tutors and governors?

Answer: They were the slaves (called guardians, stewards, tutors and governors who took care of the child.)

In simple terms;

1. The child took orders just as any slave did.
2. The father would fix a specific day when the child became a mature son.
3. When that day came, the son ceased being under the power of the tutor or governor (ready to inherit).

Paul is saying

1. Like a child under the command of the tutor, governor or slave that guarded him (an heir but not yet able to enjoy his inheritance).
2. So you and I were under the Law (V.3) until Christ was born:
 - ◆ We had a salvation to come
 - ◆ We had an inheritance to come
 - ◆ We had a freedom to come
 - ◆ We had a power to come

But until Christ arrives, there is a problem:
 “We were in bondage under the elements of the world.” (V.3)

What is this bondage?

1. The bondage is the Law we tried to keep to achieve our salvation.
2. The bondage is the slavery we were in to external codes for our acceptance.
3. The bondage is trying to keep the law to earn our justification before God.
4. The bondage is trying to please God, but not able to apart from Christ’s indwelling power.
5. The bondage is; before Christ was born we were in slavery to the Law – which exposed our sin but gave us no power over sin!

Our dilemma before Christ?

Is that we live frustrated with only the Law.

...Because we see ourselves, but cannot change ourselves.

...Because we see our weaknesses, but cannot overcome our weaknesses.

Three strikes against us.

1. “We were children”, unable to enjoy the Father’s wealth. (V.1)
2. “We were in bondage”, under the commands of a system that produced no internal change. (V.3)
3. “We were under”, instead of overcomers through the work of the Spirit. (V.3)

II. The Plan of the Lord (V.4)

“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.” (V. 4)

God’s Plan Has Four Rejoicing Realities in V.4

1. “But when the fullness of the time was come” (means)
 - ◆ Jesus was born in Bethlehem in God’s perfect timing.
 - ◆ Rome was in expectation of a deliverer.
 - ◆ Old religions were dying, empty philosophies were fading.
 - ◆ Spiritual hunger was everywhere.
 - ◆ All major roads were connected to Rome.
 - ◆ Alexander made the Greek language easy to be spoken.
2. “God send forth His Son.” (Means)
 - ◆ “God sent forth” means Jesus is Divine.
 - ◆ This means Jesus is God and all powerful.
 - ◆ This means Jesus has power over Satan.
 - ◆ This means Jesus has power over sin.
 - ◆ This means Jesus has power over death.

- ◆ This means Jesus has power to rescue us from law.

3. "Made of a woman" (Means)

- ◆ Jesus was man as well as God.
- ◆ Jesus as a man could give his life for a sacrifice.
- ◆ Jesus as a man could be our substitution.
- ◆ Jesus as a man could identify with our every need.

4. "Made under the law" (Means)

- ◆ Jesus was born subject to the Law of God.
- ◆ Jesus was born to fulfill the demands of the Law.
- ◆ Jesus was born to accomplish what we could not.
- ◆ Jesus was born to supersede the Law with a greater power of Grace.

Question: Why must Jesus be born from God?

Question: Why must Jesus be born of the Virgin Mary?

Question: Why must Jesus be born under the Law to meet its demands?

Question: Why must Jesus be born under the system that condemned every one of us?

III. The Purchase of our Liberty (V. 5)

"To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." (V.5)

Fact: We all were under the Law before Christ.

Fact: We all have violated the Law.

Fact: We all deserve the penalty of the Law – death!

Question: But what did Jesus do; what has Jesus done, why did Jesus come to earth?

Answer: "To redeem them (us) that were under the Law." (V.5)

Question: What does it mean to "redeem"?

Answer: It means; "to purchase by the paying of a price."

Why was Jesus born

1. To purchase us out of the Law that enslaved us!
2. To purchase us from the Law that condemned us!
3. To purchase us from the Law that revealed our sin, but gave no power over sin!
4. To give us a power over every power that was against us!
5. To satisfy the Law what we could not satisfy!
6. To receive the penal consequences on our behalf!
7. To rescue us from the rule that crushed us!
8. To enable us to "receive the adoption of sons"!
9. To enable us to become sons instead of slaves!
10. To enable us to live an overcoming life of power and victory by the Holy Spirit's power!

IV. The Provision of our Legacy (V.6,7)

"And because we are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father." (V.6)

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (V.7)

Fact: The Law (And its yoke of bondage) cut off our approach to God.

Fact: But Jesus has come to make us sons and daughters and come near to God.

Question: What's the effect of God sending forth His Son?

Question: What does Christmas mean to you and me now?

Question: What is the result of Jesus being born from Mary?

Three Glorious Benefits

1. We've been "accepted"

"Ye are sons" (V.6 means)

- ◆ We have been accepted through Christ's merits.
- ◆ We have been accepted and fully pardoned.
- ◆ We have been accepted and wonderfully received.
- ◆ We have gone from "arm's length", "distant" and "unable to approach" to being adopted fully with great privileges.

Remember: The slave has a master but the child has a father.

Application: This Christmas season, are you lonely? Forsaken? Feel Betrayed? Left out? Away from God?

2. We've been "empowered"

"God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts; crying, Abba Father." (V. 6)

Fact: The Law was solely an external authority and could not change the heart!

Fact: But now, in Christ, the Holy spirit penetrates the inner man to empower us, renew us, quicken us and conform us into the likeness of Jesus.

Notice the Holy Spirit's Ministry

"Crying, Abba Father" (V.6)

- ◆ "Crying" refers to the Holy Spirit exposing, revealing and showing us our need. (We see our need and cry out.)
- ◆ "Abba Father" refers to the fullness of supply of that need in our Heavenly Father. (We receive God's grace and power for every need).

In Other Words

- ◆ The Holy Spirit reveals to us our need of God,
- ◆ The Holy Spirit supplies that need through our all sufficient Heavenly Father.

3. We've been "Delivered"

"Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (V.7)

Fact: "We are no longer servants" means:

- ◆ We are "no long" suppressed by ceremony of Law.
- ◆ We are "no longer" slaves in servitude to sin.
- ◆ We are "no longer" in bondage to the law of sin Jesus condemned in His flesh.
- ◆ We are "no longer" slaves to anything Jesus is not a slave to.

- ◆ We are emancipated from the controlling and ruling power of a sinful nature. (We still have our sinful, carnal, old man nature – but its power to dominate and rule us has been broken) **P.T.L!**

“An Heir of God through Christ”

(Means)

1. We are entitled to all privileges as children of our Redeemer!
2. We are no longer subject to the things that rob us from enjoying our adoption!
3. We are delivered from every besetting sin that would ruin our Christmas!

“No longer” (means)

We “no longer” have to live in bondage to the things Jesus has power over!!

Believe the Word

“For what the Law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh.” (Romans 8:3)

Question: What is an heir?

Answer: An heir is someone who receives an inheritance because of another!

Question: What’s this mean to you and me?

Answer: It means that Christmas is now!

- ◆ It means that there is “Christmas Power” to enjoy living as children of God in a world polluted, contaminated and ruled by Satan.

Conclusion

1. The problem of the Law (V.1-3)
Is that it could not change us from the inside out.
2. The Plan of the Lord (V.4)
Was to send His only Son, made of a woman, to satisfy the just demands of a Holy Law.
3. The Purchase of our Liberty (V.5)
Was to secure our freedom from all bondage through the paying of a price.
4. The Provision of our Legacy (V. 6,7)
Was God sending forth His Spirit to show us our need, meet that need and empower us to live as Heirs of God!

Amen!
Bill Kirk