

Parson to Person
(Galatians 4 – Part 1)
(The Master, The Slave, and The Son)

“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 were 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” (Galatians 4:1–7).

Under the Law?

Paul taught the Galatians that *“the law was [a] tutor to bring [the Jews] to Christ, that [they] might be justified by faith (3:24).* Moreover, he taught that *“after faith has come, [they] are no longer under a tutor” (3:25).* Therefore, every believing Jew who has come to faith in Jesus is no longer under the law—the tutor.

All Have Sinned—and Need a Savior

Paul wrote, *“Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world (Gentiles included) may become guilty before God” (Romans 3:19).* Therefore, the Gentiles were/are just as guilty of violating the law as were/are the Jews.

Both Jew and Gentile are guilty of law breaking. Moreover, as the result of law, we know sin. Therefore, Paul wrote, *“by the law [we have] the knowledge of sin” (Romans 3:20b).* Herein we know

(or should know) that *“all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23).

The Gentiles were never under the law (see Romans 2:1–2; 9:4). However, inasmuch as Gentiles have a basic knowledge of the law and have to some degree measured good and bad based upon it (see Romans 2:14–15), if or when they/we come to faith in Christ, we too are free from the law’s death advancing/condemning nature.

The Law: Obsolete but Established

Paul wrote about the law’s continuing role as the *“ministry of death”* (2 Corinthians 3:7). Therefore, rhetorically he asked the Romans, *“Do we then make void the law through faith? Certainly not! On the contrary, we establish the law”* (Romans 3:31).

We know that *“by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight”* (Romans 3:20a). Therefore, why establish the law? The answer is simple: The law continues to make “all the world guilty before God.” Therefore, the *“ministry of death”* shows us our need and directs us to the only one who can provide us life: Jesus.

The obsolescence of the law is the removal of its authority and power to condemn the believer and the removal of “requirements” that were “against us” (Colossians 2:14).

No Longer Under the Law

“Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, ‘Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree’)” (Galatians 3:13). Therefore, once we place our faith/trust in Jesus, the law is no longer needed. The law brought condemnation; Jesus liberates. The law makes guilty; Jesus removes all guilt. The law generates fear; Love casts out fear.

Sons Not Children

Upon the “abolition of the law” (see Ephesians 2:15) and “freedom from the law” (see 3:13 and 5:1) believers are “*no longer under a tutor*” (3:25) and are thus treated as adult “*sons*,” not children. Sons, because both Jew and Gentile—in Jesus—are, by faith, moved from slavery to freedom and from poverty to inheritance.

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Illustrated Freedom

Paul illustrated, a purpose of the law as tutorial training—similar to what a child would receive from a parent or guardian. The outgrowth of that truth declared that a child grows up. When entering adulthood, the child no longer requires the limitations and oversight of a master/tutor. He or she is given the freedom to make decisions, exercise responsibilities, and enjoy the blessings of adulthood.

At adult onset, a child would be formally “adopted” into adult life.

Empowering: The New Covenant and Life in the Spirit

The New Covenant was introduced to Israel and Judah in Jeremiah 31:31. It was symbolically re-introduced/initiated by Jesus to His disciples at The Last Supper (see Matthew 26:28). The Old Covenant came to its end at the cross (see Colossians 2:13–14). The early recipients of the New Covenant were the 120 men and women who were gathered together (ecclesia) on the Day of Pentecost (see Acts 2). From that day forward and throughout the Church Age, along with the climactic fruition in the Millennial Kingdom, the New Covenant “*promise of the Spirit through faith*” (3:14b) continues (see Ezekiel 36:24–32).

Herein Paul demonstrated that the Holy Spirit, who dwells within the born-again believer, empowers the regenerated to live in righteousness—“apart from the deeds of the law that were written in stone.” He leads and guides us from within. He enables us to walk under His rule—as adult sons. This is the glorious liberty we have in Christ. “*For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death*” (Romans 8:2).

Responsibilities—How Then Shall We Live

Paul saw the believer as “adopted sons,” “mature enough” to make good and responsible decisions without the need of a tutor. We have no leash—like a dog but are thought to be “well trained” and able to walk in step with our loving Father. For this reason, as motivated by love, the believer is encouraged to cry out in the most affectionate term “Abba.” We obey because we love, not fear. We love because He first loved us!

As a son is called to honor his father, an obedient believer will /should do the same.

I love you all,
Pastor Paul

“How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin. Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. Likewise, you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. And do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God. For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace” (Romans 6:2b–14).