Home group Questions – December 2020

Galatians 4:1-7

In this passage, Paul likens our salvation to a child coming of age and being received as a full son in the household. He explains that the plight of the unbeliever is like that of a slave! But that in God’s perfect timing, he sent his Son not just to redeem us but to bring us into full membership of the family.

This is an essential truth that we must grasp. We are not only Redeemed (ransomed, debt of sin satisfied, freed!) but we are also Adopted (heirs with Christ).

If we are to really appreciate the role that the Law of God plays in our lives we must grasp both of these truths.

**Big Idea:** “…you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.”

**Q Read v1-3.** In what respects is a child “no different from a slave”!? What was it that held us in slavery according to verse 3? What does this mean?

**Q Read v4-5.** How has the Son redeemed us? What does redemption mean?

**Q What else have we received in 5?**

**Q Read v6-7.** What is the immediate result of our Adoption? How does this relate to what Paul said in chapter 3:2-3?

**Q What are the benefits of our Adoption?**

**Q How do you think this affects our relationship with the Law?**

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Galatians 4:8-20

In this passage, Paul pleads with the Galatian believers not to return, even in principle to the system of religion from which they were first converted; seeking salvation through works. It is because of this that they have lost the joy that they first had when he was with them at the beginning. The Judaisers want recognition for themselves and so they have alienated these believers from the Apostles. So Paul pleads with them to see sense – they should not be trying to become like these false teachers, instead they should be following his example in becoming like Christ.

**Big Idea:** Returning to the slavery of working for God’s love robs us of our joy and our assurance

**Q Read v8-11.** In what way is the pagan religion from which the Galatians had been converted based on the same principles as the teaching of the Judaisers?
Q Read v12. In what way do you think Paul became like the Galatians (take a look at 1 Corinthians 9:19-23)? In what way does Paul want them now to become like him (see v19)?

Q Read v13-16. How had the Galatians first received Paul? How had their attitude towards his changed?

Q According to v17, what caused this change? What do these false teachers want from the Galatians? How is this different from what Paul wants for them?

Q What is legalism? What forms does it take in the church? How do we combat it?

Galatians 4:21-31
In this passage, Paul uses the story of Sarah and Hagar as an allegory to show that there are 2 ways to be descended from Abraham, by the flesh (v23, 29 “In the ordinary way”) or by the power of the Spirit (v29).

Those who try to bring about God’s blessing by working for it are children of Hagar – Ishmael was a product of Abraham and Sarah taking things into their own hands. Those who come to God by Faith in His promise are children of Sarah – Isaac was the miraculous child, born not by effort or ability but by the power of the Spirit.

**Big Idea:** Those who are born of the flesh (who put their trust in their own ability and effort rather than God’s promise), “will never share in the inheritance with the free woman’s son” (v30).

Q Read v21-23. What’s the story Paul is referring to? Who are the 2 women and their sons?

Q What was different about the way that Hagar and Sarah produced their offspring? What does Paul mean in v23 by “the ordinary way” (NIV) or “according to the flesh” (ESV)?

Q Read v24-27. How does Paul contrast these 2 women and their children? What do they stand for?

Q How would this allegory have been a shock to the Judaisers (the false teachers)? How would you describe the 2 types of people that these 2 different children represent?

Q Read v28-31 (also look at Genesis 21:8-10). What do children of “flesh” do to children of promise? Why do you think this is? Where might we see this?

Q What is the inheritance that these children of the flesh will never share?
Galatians 5:1-15
This passage sums up the big theme of the letter; Christian Freedom. The big issue that the Galatians were facing was that those false teacher who had come amongst them were trying to put them under a yoke of slavery to the law.

But if we do this – if we turn to the law for righteousness – then we will never have any assurance of our salvation and, more importantly, it means that actually there was no point in Christ or the cross! It is a rejection of Grace (v4).

This teaching about works righteousness is pervasive – it spread, even amongst God’s people, like yeast through dough – and so we must do our utmost to resist it.

**Big Idea:** The yeast of legalism can only be eliminated if we stand firm in the true Gospel of Grace.

**Q** Read v1-3. What is the yoke of slavery that Paul urges the Galatian not to be burdened by? According to v3, what’s the problem with circumcision? Is circumcision itself the problem (see v6)?

**Q** According to v5, how is the righteousness we need actually obtained?

**Q** Read v7-12. Paul likens the false teaching of the Judaisers to yeast. What does he mean? How do we see this in our lives?

**Q** How does preaching “righteousness by works” remove the offense of the cross (v11)?

**Q** Read v13-15. How is true, gospel freedom not to be used? How should it be used? What is surprising about this? How might this true freedom be expressed in your life?

**Q** How would this allegory have been a shock to the Judaisers (the false teachers)? How would you describe the 2 types of people that these 2 different children represent?