

Heirs of God (Part 2)

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[0 : 00] Galatians 3.26-4.7 comprise one section of text.

! We looked at the final verses of Galatians 3 two weeks ago.! We'll finish that section tonight by looking at the first seven verses of Galatians chapter 4. Let's read the text again, starting with Galatians 3.26.

Paul wrote in those verses, For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on 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. And if you are Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.

I mean that the heir, as long as he is a child, is no different from a slave, though he is the owner of everything. But he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father.

[1 : 09] In the same way, we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

And because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of his son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if a son, then an heir through God.

The main idea for this section of text is the same as we saw two weeks ago for part one. That is that God sent his son to redeem those who put their faith in Jesus.

All those believers have an equal standing as adopted heirs of God. Once again, God sent his son to redeem those who put their faith in Jesus. All those believers have an equal standing as adopted heirs of God.

We'll do a little bit of review here to start off. And in the verses we covered last time, in Galatians 3, 26 through 29, we saw that believers are regenerated to be sons of God, regardless of whether those believers are male or female.

[2 : 29] Paul telling the Galatians that God treats every believer as a son was a good thing. Paul was elevating the status of females. In the Galatian culture, only sons were considered heirs.

When Paul said that every believer becomes a son of God, Paul was saying that every believer, male or female, receives the same blessings from God. The end of chapter 3 discussed the benefits that believers get from salvation.

Regeneration, faith, justification, adoption, sanctification, union, redemption, assurance, and boldness in prayer are just a few of those things.

And all of these things are ours right now as part of our inheritance. As believers, we also receive eternal life and will eventually have dominion over the earth.

In verse 328, Paul showed that being in Christ creates equality across three different things that normally divide people. The Jew and Greek comparison in 328 related to ethnicity, the slave and free comparison related to social or economic status, and the male or female comparison related to gender.

[3 : 45] Although God has different roles for males and females within his church, every believer receives the same blessing from God regardless of the believer's gender.

That review catches us up to the new material that we'll cover tonight. The first few verses of Galatians 4 may remind you of one of those TV shows that flashes back to show you something from the past.

Paul reminds his readers, including us, about what life was like for believers before Christ redeemed us. And in the second section of this larger passage, Paul says that we were restricted

as if slaves under guard.

So restricted as if slaves under guard is what fills in your blanks. Look at verses 1 through 3 of Galatians 4 again.

Paul said there, The word translated child in verse 1 can be used for an older child, but Paul typically uses the term for a baby boy, an infant, or even an immature person.

[5 : 16] Listen to a couple of the other times that Paul used the word translated as child. These examples will show us that Paul typically used the term to refer to infants or to include a negative connotation in what he was saying.

1 Corinthians 3, verses 1 and 2 say, But I, brothers, could not address you as spiritual people, but as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it, and even now you are not ready. The word translated as infants in 1 Corinthians 3, verse 1 is the same term translated as child in Galatians 4, verse 1.

Later on in 1 Corinthians, Paul wrote these words in chapter 13, verse 11. 1 Corinthians 13, verse 11 says, In this section of Galatians that we're starting with tonight, Paul gives his readers another one of his word pictures.

He wants the Galatians to think about how society treats infants and children in their day. In the Galatians day, families would assign certain capable and trusted slaves to act as guardians and managers over the child until that child was grown.

[6 : 49] Along with his tutor that we talked about when we looked at verses 24 and 25 of chapter 3, those other family slaves would have virtually full charge of the child's education, his training, and his welfare.

The child was subservient to them and could do nothing without their permission, and he could go nowhere without their companionship. For all practical purposes, the child did not differ at all from a slave under whom he was being trained.

Just as a slave had masters, so the child had masters. In ancient Greece, a festival would be held when a boy turned 18, and the boy was declared a type of cadet with special responsibilities to his clan or city-state for a period of two years.

The Romans had a similar ceremony, and that change in status was marked by giving the boy an adult toga. And we're familiar with the Jewish ceremony.

The Jewish ceremony was and still is called bar mitzvah. The Greek and Roman similarities were consistent across their ceremonies. During the Greek coming-of-age ceremony, the boys' long hair would be cut off and offered to the god Apollo.

[8 : 06] And at the Roman ceremony, boys would take their toys, and at a similar ceremony, girls would take their dolls, and they would offer them in a sacrifice to the gods as a symbol of putting their childhood behind them.

We just read 1 Corinthians 13.11, where Paul wrote about giving up childish ways. And a lot of people think that in that verse, Paul is most likely referencing this ceremony where the children, who were now recognized as adults by their society, gave up their toys.

Then at the Jewish bar mitzvah, observed on the first Sabbath after a boy's 12th birthday, the boy's father would pray these words. He would say, Blessed be thou, O God, who hath taken from me the responsibility of this boy.

And then the boy would pray, O my God and God of my father, on this solemn and sacred day, which marks my passage from boyhood to manhood, I humbly raise my eyes unto thee and declare with sincerity and truth that henceforth I will keep thy commandments and undertake to bear the responsibility of my actions toward thee.

But until these coming-of-age ceremonies happened, a minor in the Galatian culture had no legal rights, even if that minor was an heir to a large fortune.

[9 : 26] The father dictated the terms of the minor's life. So in that sense, a minor heir was treated the same way that slaves were treated. And that's why Paul could write in Galatians 4.1 that the heir as a child is no different than a slave.

That heir would one day own everything, but only after the time set by his father had arrived. And that's the reference that Paul is making in verse 2. Notice again what Paul says in Galatians 4.2.

He says, But he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. Until the time set by the heir's father, the heir's childhood was like a form of bondage.

And in verse 3, Paul applies his example of underage heirs to what believers once were. Galatians 4:3 says, In the same way, we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.

The word translated as children here in verse 3 is the plural form of the word that Paul used for child in verse 1. So Paul says that when we were children, we were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world.

[10:47] In Greek, that term elementary principles can mean a couple of things. It can mean essential components or basic concepts. And the term was sometimes used to refer to basic teachings like what we would call the ABCs.

Both Jewish and pagan religions centered on a man-made system of works. They were both filled with rules and regulations, the obeying of which were thought to make a person right with that person's God.

The elemental things of all human religion, whether Jewish or Gentile, ancient or modern, inevitably involved the idea of achieving divine acceptance by our own efforts.

And they're elemental in that they're only human, never rising beyond the mundane to the divine.

We know that Paul wrote Galatians to counteract the Judaizers, and those were false teachers who wrongly said that Christians need to follow the laws of Judaism to be saved.

The Jewish law could be what Paul has in mind when he refers to the elemental principles. And we mentioned how the word translated as elementary principles could refer to basic teachings like the ABCs.

[12:03] And so to study the Jewish law was to learn the alphabet, so to speak, of God's will. Even in Old Testament days, before Christ came and when people were under the law, those people were heirs, heirs of the promise which God made to Abraham.

But the people who were heirs still had not yet inherited the promise. They were like children during the years of their minority, and their childhood was also a form of bondage.

But there's another way to interpret elementary principles, which also includes the Gentiles. The Gentiles were just as enslaved to their pagan idolatry as the Jews had been to their servitude to the law.

Among the pagans, elementary principles could refer to spiritual beings, such as the elemental spirits of the earth, air, fire, and water, all things that the pagans tended to worship.

So perhaps when Paul spoke of being enslaved to the elementary principles of the world, he had in his mind demonic powers. Here's John Stott's take on the meaning of being enslaved to the elementary principles of the world, and his take ties both possible meanings together.

[13:20] John Stott said, What Paul means is that the devil took this good thing, the law, and twisted it to his own evil purpose to enslave men and women.

Just as during a child's minority, his guardian may ill-treat and even tyrannize him in ways which his father never intended, so the devil has exploited God's good law to tyrannize men in ways God never intended.

God intended the law to reveal sin and to drive men to Christ. Satan uses it to reveal sin and to drive men to despair. God meant the law as an interim step to man's justification.

Satan uses it as the final step to his condemnation. God meant the law to be a stepping stone to liberty. Satan uses it as a cul-de-sac, deceiving his dupes into supposing that from its fearful bondage there is no escape.

When you think about it, Satan's approach almost always is to take a good thing from God and twist that good thing for an evil purpose.

[14:27] That approach goes all the way back to the very first sin in the Garden of Eden.

Remember that God gave Adam and Eve only one rule. Satan made it seem as if that one rule was something that had been instituted for their detriment.

Several millennia later, we still see Satan twisting God's rules to drive people to despair. Before we leave this section, consider how both the law and the gospel fit well with the picture of schoolchildren being educated.

Eventually, schoolchildren outgrow their elementary education. They eventually master the alphabet and move on to composition. And in the same way, God raised his people on the law to prepare them for the gospel.

And that gospel shows up again front and center in the next verses that we will cover. So far, we've seen that we were regenerated to be sons of God.

Paul also has reminded us that we were once restricted as if slaves under guard. Fortunately for us and for all believers in Christ, God never intended to leave us under those restrictions.

[15:42] Paul returns to the gospel or the good news in the last section of this passage. And in verses 4-7, Paul reminds us that we have been redeemed by the Son of God.

We have been redeemed by the Son of God. Listen to Galatians 4, verses 4-7 again. These are verses that we often hear around Christmastime.

But as we read the verses this time, notice something in particular. Notice how all three members of the Trinity are represented in these verses. Starting with verse 4 of Galatians 4, it says, But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father. So you are no longer a slave, but a son. And if a son, then an heir through God.

These verses point back to what we saw at the end of chapter 3, in verses 26-29, and these verses build upon that passage. Keep in mind what we discussed in our review of verses 26-29.

[17:07] For the Galatians, both males and females being treated as sons of God would have been a nearly unbelievable concept. Women who perhaps had been oppressed and belittled would have heard that God loves them as much as he loves any man.

And you probably noticed that the theme of this section is adoption. And before we dig into the verses, we need to understand the significance of adoption in the Galatian culture.

In the first century, there were two ways that you could get an inheritance. One would be by being a natural-born heir, or the other would be by becoming an adopted heir.

But there was one major difference. A natural-born heir in the Galatian culture could be disinherited, and often was. But an adopted heir, once the adoption was final, could never be disinherited.

The legal concept of an irrevocable inheritance for an adopted heir underlies Paul's doctrine of adoption that he's teaching here in these verses.

[18:15] God has adopted all believers, male and female, as sons. And that adoption is irrevocable. Verses 4 and 5 waste no time in giving us the good news.

And so here are those verses again. But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

When the fullness of time had come is an important phrase. Under ancient law, as we've seen, the father had the right to fix the time when his son would receive his estate.

And in the same way, God the Father determined when God the Son would come to give all God's children their inheritance. Jesus came, wrote John Calvin, when the time which had been ordained by the providence of God was seasonable and fit.

Being God himself, Jesus also knew that he came at the perfect time. Listen to what Mark chapter 1, verses 14 and 15 say.

[19:27] Here are Mark chapter 1, verses 14 and 15. Now after John, talking about John the Baptist, was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God and saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand, repent and believe in the gospel.

Christ came when the world was ready for his coming. The Greeks had provided a common language and culture for sharing the gospel. And through the might of the Romans, there were good roads and safe transport for spreading that gospel.

Most of all, sinners were ready to be released from their bondage. The Gentiles were tired of serving the old pagan gods, which really were no gods at all. The Jews were weary of being held prisoner by the law that they had tried and failed over and over again to keep.

They'd been trying to keep that law for over a thousand years. It was just at that right time and not a moment too soon and not a moment too late that Christ came to make us God's sons.

The phrase, when the fullness of time had come, shows that God had always planned to send his son into the world to redeem God's people. We need to have a certain picture of God here in our minds and our picture of God here should be of God eagerly awaiting the appointed day to arrive so that he could rescue his people.

[20 : 58] That picture of God waiting with great anticipation is why the picture of adoption makes a good illustration here. Think about when prospective parents are waiting for the adoption day.

Their anticipation of that day grows more and more as the day draws closer. And to begin to grasp the significance of God adopting us, we need to understand that from eternity past, God was eagerly awaiting the time that he had set to rescue us and all other believers.

When the time was right, God acted. It says, God sent forth his son, born of a woman, born under the law. The fact that the son was sent shows that the son existed before he was born in Bethlehem.

His sending from heaven declares his divine nature. Jesus Christ is God the son, fully equal to the father in glory and might. His sonship is eternal.

He's the only begotten son of the father, the second person of the trinity, who lived with his father in glory from eternity past. But when the time had fully come, the eternally divine son of God came down from heaven into the world as a man.

[22 : 16] Jesus was equal to God, yet he willingly submitted himself to the father during his incarnation, just as an obedient son does to an earthly father. Listen to what Paul wrote to the Philippians in Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 through 8.

Again, these verses are Philippians chapter 2 verses 5 through 8. Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men, and being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Let's move on and look at one of the next phrases in Galatians 4.4, and that is born of a woman.

Born of a woman here does not so much refer to Jesus' virgin birth, as important as that great truth is, it refers to his complete humanity.

He was fully man, born of a woman like all other men, yet he also was fully God. Otherwise, he could not have been savior of the world. He had to be fully God for his sacrifice to have the infinite worth necessary to atone for the sin of mankind.

He also had to be fully man to represent mankind and take the penalty of sin upon himself in man's behalf. It was man who sinned, it was man who was under the curse, and it was man who was condemned to death.

[24 : 03] Jesus could not have substituted for a sinful man on the cross had he not taken upon himself the likeness of men, like we read about in Philippians 2.7. He had to be God to have the power of savior, and he had to be man to have the position of substitute.

So once again, he had to be God to have the power of savior, and he had to be man to have the position of substitute. As God, Jesus came forth, but as a man, he was made of a woman.

The ancient promise said that the redeemer would be the offspring of a woman. That goes all the way back to Genesis 3.15. Jesus fulfilled that promise. Everything in our passage tonight, and in the Bible itself, points to the fact that God had planned to redeem mankind before the foundation of the earth.

That plan of redemption was in place before Adam and Eve ever sinned. God knew that humans would need a perfectly qualified redeemer. Like every other man, Jesus was born under the law. The Jews had the written law. the Gentiles had the law written on their hearts. Listen to Romans chapter 2, verses 14 through 16.

[25 : 26] For when Gentiles who do not have the law by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them on that day when, according to my gospel, God judges the secrets of men by Jesus Christ.

Throughout his life, Jesus submitted to all the requirements of the law. He succeeded where all others before and since have failed. He perfectly fulfilled the righteousness of the law.

The divinity of Christ, the humanity of Christ, and the righteousness of Christ uniquely qualified him to be man's redeemer. If he had not been man, he could not have redeemed men.

If he had not been a righteous man, he could not have redeemed unrighteous men. And if he had not been God's son, he could not have redeemed men for God or made them sons of God.

So think about what verses 4 and 5 show us. Paul has told us who came. He's told us when he came. And he's told us how he came.

[26 : 46] He also has told us why he came, and that is to redeem those who were under the law. Redeemed there is the same word that Paul used earlier in verse 313, and it means to set free by paying a price.

A man could purchase a slave in any Roman city, and the Galatians were under that Roman law. And when a man purchased the slave, he could either keep that slave for himself, or he could set that slave free.

Jesus came to set us free. And Paul is saying that to go back to the law is to undo the very work of Christ on the cross. Jesus did not purchase us to make us slaves.

He purchased us to make us sons. And under the law, the Jews were mere children, but under grace, the believer is a son of God, with an adult standing in God's family.

Look one more time at verse 5. It says, God sent forth his son to redeem those who were under the law so that we might receive adoption as sons. So here are a couple questions to think about.

[27 : 57] As believers, do we really understand and believe that truth? And if we do understand and believe that truth, do we live like we understand and believe it?

As mentioned when we talked about verse 329 last time, we already have begun to participate in our inheritance. No longer are we heirs in waiting because the work of redemption has been completed.

We already have begun to participate in eternal life. Because of our union with Christ, we are seated with him in the heavenly places. As part of our inheritance, we've received regeneration, faith, justification, adoption, and sanctification along with the hope of glory.

And we also have the subjective reality of the inheritance. The good news keeps coming, though. Look again at Galatians 4, verses 6 and 7. Paul wrote there, And because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of his son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father.

So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Verse 6 is where we see the Holy Spirit enter the picture.

[29 : 20] God did more than send his son. God sent his spirit, the third person of the Trinity. Paul's use of the term son again shows that like the son, the spirit always has existed.

God confirms believers as his adopted sons through the gift of the Holy Spirit, which is called the spirit of his son here in this verse. Believers have the knowledge of sonship through the truth of God's word in their minds, and the very essence of sonship through his indwelling spirit in their hearts.

And here's where the example of adoption breaks down a little bit. A human father cannot give his own nature to an adopted child, but God can and does give us his nature by sending his spirit to dwell within the hearts of every believer.

In Ephesians chapter 1 verses 3 through 14, Paul expands upon what he wrote here in Galatians. We're going to jump over to Ephesians chapter 1 and read verses 3 through 14.

They say, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

[30 : 47] In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the beloved.

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ, as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it to the praise of his glory.

Notice that in that Ephesians passage, Paul tells us that the Holy Spirit seals us and serves as the guarantee of our inheritance. You can think of it as kind of like the down payment or earnest money. [32 : 18] However, we already have privileges from our inheritance. Believers are already God's sons with all the family privileges. We have the privilege of communion with God, the privilege of prayer, of coming freely and boldly into the Father's presence.

We have personal enjoyment in the solace, comfort, and joy that comes from justification and adoption. These personal benefits are described in the shorter catechism number 36.

That says, what are the benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification? The benefits which in this life do accompany or flow from justification, adoption, and sanctification are assurance of God's love, peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end.

I'd say that's a little bit better than a down payment, wouldn't you? Going back to Galatians 4.6, look at Galatians 4.6 again, it says, and because you are sons, God has sent the spirit of his son into our hearts crying, Abba, Father.

Let's talk about the significance of the cry, Abba, Father. Abba is a smaller form of the Aramaic word for father. It was a term of endearment used by young children of their fathers, and we might translate it daddy or papa.

[33 : 54] The Holy Spirit brings us into a personal, intimate relationship with our heavenly Father, whom we can approach at any time and under any circumstance, knowing that he will always hear us and lovingly care for us, because we are truly his own.

Paul uses both the Aramaic term Abba and the Greek term Father there. Here we have an expression of the universality of the gospel, and that's in great contrast to the Judaizers' concept of God.

The Judaizers would have had a problem calling God Abba or Papa or Daddy, although God was the father of the Old Covenant people. To the Judaizers, God was much more distant, so they would never think about calling him Daddy.

They would be too irreverent for them. Paul, however, joins the Jewish expression of intimacy with the Gentile expression of fatherhood here, and again, that shows us one more time that all believers are one in Christ and are indwelt by the Spirit, regardless of what our language is.

We know that God is our Father and that we can address him intimately. The fact that a believer has an intimate relationship with God and can confidently cry out to him as Father is a beautiful and magnificent proof of sonship.

[35 : 21] Those who have the status of divine sonship through the Son also have the essence and assurance of it through the Spirit, who draws them into intimate communication with their heavenly Father.

To the Romans, Paul wrote these words that parallel our passage in Galatians. Listen to Romans chapter 8, verses 15 and 16.

Romans 8, 15 and 16 say, For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the spirit of adoption as sons by whom we cry, Abba, Father.

The spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God. God's purpose was to secure our sonship by his Son and to assure us of that sonship by the Holy Spirit.

God sent his Son that we might have the status of sonship and he sent his Spirit that we might have the experience of sonship. And that experience comes through the affectionate, confidential intimacy of our access to God when we go to God in prayer.

[36 : 35] When we go to God in prayer, we find ourselves assuming the attitude and using the language not of slaves, but of sons. The indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit witnessing to our sonship and prompting our prayers is a precious privilege of all God's children.

It is because you are sons that God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts. And that, of course, is from verse 6. Notice that no other qualification is needed.

There's no need to recite some formula, strive after some experience, or fulfill some extra condition. Paul says to us clearly that if we are God's children and because we are God's children, God has sent his Spirit into our hearts.

And the way he assures us of our sonship is not by some spectacular gift or sign, but the quiet inward witness of the Holy Spirit as we pray.

We haven't talked about Galatians 4.7 yet, but that verse is an important reminder to close out this section. Galatians 4.7 says, So you are no longer a slave, but a son.

[37 : 53] And if a son, then an heir through God. Think back to verse 3. In verse 3, Paul told us that before Christ came, we were like slaves.

But for believers, we are no longer slaves. We are sons. We are heirs. What we are as Christians, as sons and heirs of God, is not through our own merit, nor through our own effort, but through God and through God's initiative of grace.

And we know that God sent his son to die for us, and then he sent his Spirit to live in us. By calling his children sons, therefore, God guaranteed that all his sons and daughters would be included in his will and testament.

The promise of eternal life with God in heaven is for everyone who becomes a child of God through faith in Jesus Christ. Our adoption by God means that we have an eternal family.

We've already seen in 328 that in Christ we have union with one another. As those in God's family, we relate to one another as brothers and sisters.

[39 : 09] Romans 8.17 says that we also are fellow heirs with Christ. And of course, that parallels what we see here in Galatians. Elsewhere, we are told that we are brothers with Jesus.

One of those examples is Hebrews 2.11. Jesus is our elder brother, though not in a way that compromises his divinity, as some cults might have you believe.

We are not equal to Jesus, and we can never be equal to Jesus. But scripture does teach that everything that belongs to Jesus belongs to us as co-heirs with Jesus.

When Jesus died and rose again, he paid for our freedom and also provided us with our adoption papers that made us sons of the Most High God. Think back to just after Jesus' resurrection.

After Jesus' resurrection, the women ran away from the tomb to tell the disciples that Jesus had risen from the dead. And suddenly, Jesus was standing right in front of those women, and they fell down to worship him.

[40 : 17] And Matthew 28.10 tells us that Jesus greeted them with these words. Matthew 28.10 says, Go and tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me.

So notice there that Jesus called the disciples brothers. That's because by that time, he had brought them into God's family by his death and resurrection. Remember the main idea.

God sent his son to redeem those who put their faith in Jesus. All those believers have an equal standing as adopted heirs of God. Your status with God was settled on the day that you were declared righteous through faith in Christ.

But this is more than simply a change in status. You have a new life, a living relationship with God in which he communes with you and sustains you daily with love, affection, and strength.

Coming to Christ changes who we are. No matter what this world brings, we have nothing to fear because we have received the spirit of sonship that leads us to cry, Abba, Father.

[41 : 27] So do we realize the privilege of approaching God? Think about that privilege. That privilege was once reserved only for Moses in the Old Testament.

And it's now what we get to do every time we do something as simple as bowing our head to say grace before a meal. It's good to be a son and to enjoy intimacy with God.

And the Judaizers were missing it. And many professing Christians today are missing it too. They have the religious routine down, but they have no intimacy with God.

As the Apostle John put it in the first sentence of 1 John 3, 1, See what kind of love the Father has given to us that we should be called children of God.

And then he says, And so we are. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for the reminder of what was accomplished when you sent your son and then sent your spirit for us.

[42 : 33] Let us always be in awe that you have chosen to redeem us as sons. But let us also be willing to take that privilege and use it to commune with you as we now can.

Help us as we go through this week. Make us ever more mindful of sharing this good news with others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.