

AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME

Christmas Letters: Galatians

December 19, 2021

*But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son,
born of a woman, born under the law,
to redeem those under the law,
that we should receive the full rights as sons.
Galatians 4:4*

Checking my spiritual chronograph

1. How did God's history prepare the world for Jesus?
2. How did God's promises prepare the world for Jesus?

Something special about “sonship” and “daughtership” faith

²⁶ *You are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,* ²⁷ *for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.* ²⁸ *There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.* ²⁹ *If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

What I am saying is that as long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. ² He is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. ³ So also, when we were children, we were in slavery under the basic principles of the world. ⁴ But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons. ⁶ Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” ⁷ So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.

Galatians 3:26-4:7

1. This kind of faith means I'm baptized into . . . clothed with . . . one in . . . and belong to Jesus!
2. This kind of faith gives us access to the riches of God
3. This kind of faith means I'm not obligated to the “basic principles” of this world
4. This kind of faith makes Jesus' “Abba, Father” relationship with the Father ours

What we learn about God's redemption and his *hesed* love

⁷ *The LORD did not set his affection on you and choose you because you were more numerous than other peoples, for you were the fewest of all peoples.* ⁸ *But it was because the LORD loved you and kept the oath he swore to your forefathers that he brought you out with a mighty hand and redeemed you from the land of slavery, from the power of Pharaoh king of Egypt.* ⁹ *Know therefore that the LORD your God is God; he is the faithful God, keeping his covenant of love to a thousand generations of those who love him and keep his commands.*

Deuteronomy 7

1. affection: _____

2. generosity: _____

3. faithfulness: _____

What we learn about Jesus

⁴ *But when the time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under law, ⁵ to redeem those under law, that we might receive the full rights of sons.* ⁶ *Because you are sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba, Father."* ⁷ *So you are no longer a slave, but a son; and since you are a son, God has made you also an heir.*

Galatians 4:4-5

1. "Born of a woman" fulfills God's Genesis 3:15 promise

¹⁵ *And I will put enmity between you and the woman,
and between your offspring and hers;
he will crush your head,
and you will strike his heel."*

Genesis 3:15

2. Jesus was not just human, but he obligated himself to the law for our sake

¹³ *Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree." ¹⁴ He redeemed us in order that the blessing given to Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Christ Jesus, so that by faith we might receive the promise of the Spirit.*

Galatians 3:13-14

What we learn about redemption

1. Two pictures of pre-redemption: prisoner and slave (more on Wednesday night!)

²³ *Before this faith came, we were held prisoners by the law, locked up until faith should be revealed.* ²⁴ *So the law was put in charge to lead us to Christ that we might be justified by faith.* ²⁵ *Now that faith has come, we are no longer under the supervision of the law.*

Galatians 3:23

⁸ *Formerly, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those who by nature are not gods.* ⁹ *But now that you know God—or rather are known by God—how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable principles? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?*

Galatians 4:8

2. We can practice “redeeming the time”

² *Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.* ³ *And pray for us, too, that God may open a door for our message, so that we may proclaim the mystery of Christ, for which I am in chains.* ⁴ *Pray that I may proclaim it clearly, as I should.* ⁵ *Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity.* ⁶ *Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.*

Colossians 4 (see Ephesians 5:15-21 for a Holy Spirit perspective)

3. Redeemed means freedom to serve

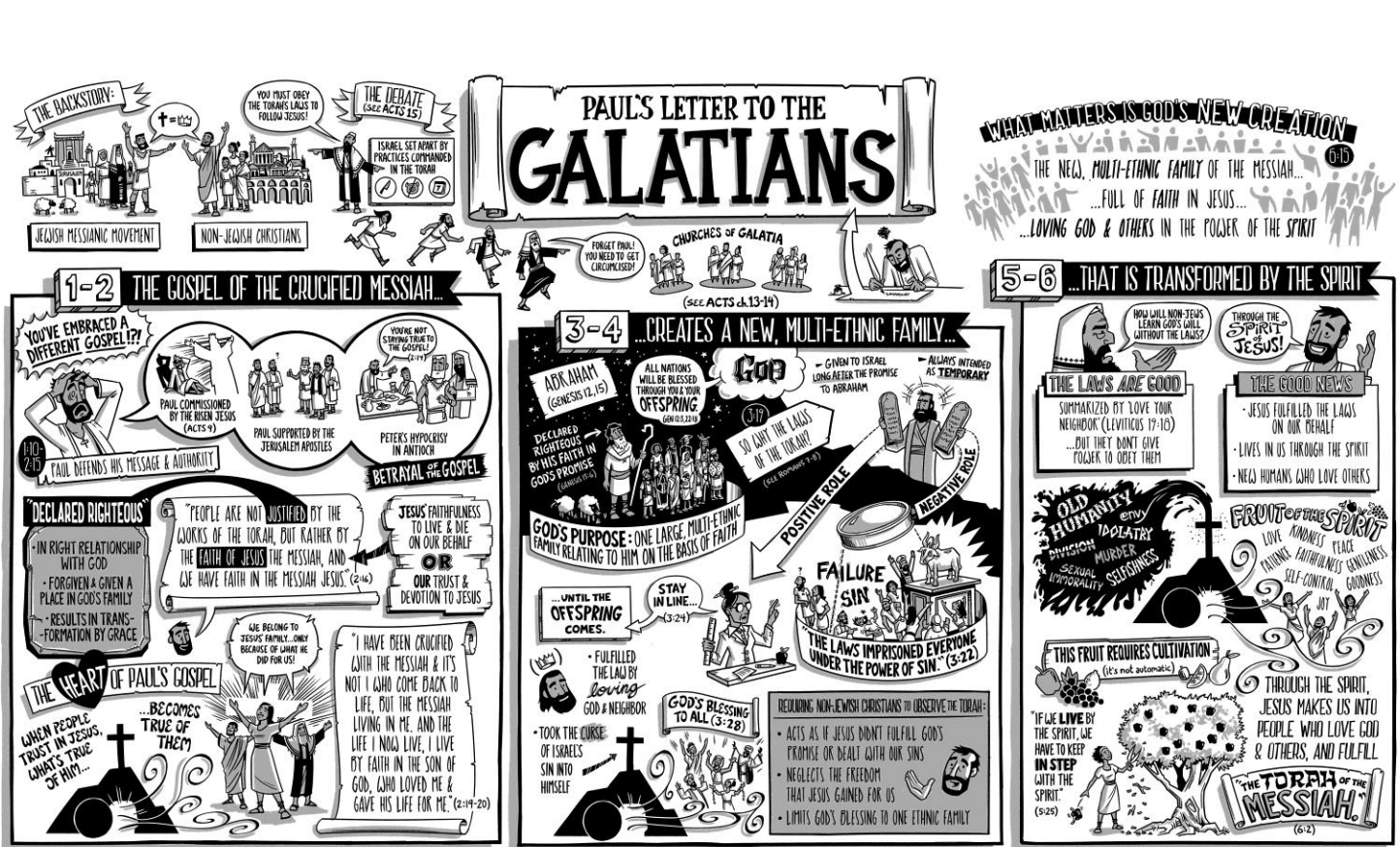
It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery . . . [the example of circumcision]

¹³ *You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.* ¹⁴ *The entire law is summed up in a single command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”* ¹⁵ *If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.*

Galatians 5

Review the “Advent in the Epistles” themes:

1. The Epistles focus more on the cross than the manger
2. The Epistles connect the First and Second Advents
3. The Epistles always connect the incarnation with Christian living



Resources for the Galatians 4

Be sure to check the [Bible Project's poster](#) on Galatians.

Deffinbaugh has [a good series on Colossians](https://bible.org/seriespage/inferiority-immaturity-galatians-41-11) with his sermon on this text at <https://bible.org/seriespage/inferiority-immaturity-galatians-41-11>

Maclaren has a helpful commentary at <https://www.studylight.org/commentaries/eng/mac/galatians-4.html>

I appreciate F. F. Bruce's NIGTC commentary on this passage (Eerdmans, 1982).

Spurgeon [has a wonderful sermon on this text](#), “The Great Birthday”, attached below.