

Galatians 3-26

Romans 4:1-10

Ephesians 1: 1-14

Read Galatians 3:19-29

Last week we read what Paul believed the role of the law truly was. The law was not the answer to fallen mankind, but a tutor, showing us our sin. Making sin exceedingly sinful, and placing all of mankind under a curse for no one can fulfill the law. We said that salvation by faith through Christ had been God's plan all along. It isn't some new thing that came after his dealings with Israel failed, he didn't turn his back on Israel and offer the gentiles something different. It was God's plan from the beginning, and even the picture of the Lamb slain in revelations...it says was before the foundation of the world.

So here we are, a promise was given to Abraham that he would have a son, and by that son there would become a great nation who would inherit a promised land. Skip ahead 430 years and we see the physical fulfillment of that. The nation of Israel, in the wilderness and God gives his holy law to them through Moses, a mediator. Skip ahead about 1500 years and see Christ, and the fulfillment of the Abrahamic promises. The seed had come who all of scripture points to. And through the seed are the true inheritors of the promise, those of faith like Abraham.

These verses that we are looking at this week more or less reiterate and reinforce what Paul has said up to this point. Paul has argued that it is through faith that we are justified before God, through the righteousness of Christ the Son, and his obedience to the cross, who became a curse for us, paying the penalty of our sin and rebellion so that we may become adopted children of God and heirs to the promises.

Today I want to look at the doctrine of adoption. There are a few points that I want to make which hopefully will show how important this doctrine is for without it, we would still be lost in our sins.

The Jews saw the world as 2 groups of people. Themselves, the children of Abraham, and the gentiles..those outside. There was even a way for people to be "adopted" into the Abraham through circumcision and the practice of the mosaic Laws. But This distinction was a misunderstanding of God's work with Israel. The new testament shows us that there are 2 distinct groups of people, and he Jews were partially right, but where they were looking at was the natural connection and missing the spiritual which was the entire point. There are 2 distinct groups, those in Christ, and those outside of Christ.

The bible repeatedly tells of mankind's condition toward God. I am going to just give a few verse's quickly which shows our natural condition toward God.

Romans 5:12 says, Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned. So Through Adam, sin entered the world, and it is an inherited trait that all mankind has through their father Adam.

Ephesians 2: And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins. In which you once walked according to the course of this world. According to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who

now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by NATURE children of wrath just as the others.

Our natural state, that of sin, rebellion, and deserving of God's wrath.

Or in John 8:44 Jesus tells the pharisees, You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murder from the beginning and does not stand in truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources for he is a liar and a father of it.

Here he is talking to the pharisees, but the same can be said for all who are not the adopted children of God. If you are not a child of God, then you are a natural child of the devil.

Also in 1st john 3:7 says Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil. Whoever has been born of God does not sin, for His seed remains in him, and he cannot sin, because he has been born of God. In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: whoever does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor is he who does not love his brother.

So we are all sons and daughters of Adam, lost in our sin, we are all children of wrath and our father is the devil.

So we see the bible divides all of humanity into 2 groups, those who's father is God in heaven, and those who's father is the devil. This is why the adoption doctrine is so important, for it takes us, children of wrath, and brings us into the family of God, making us children of the promises.

Just like in a secular adoption there is a price that must be paid. But in the case of our spiritual adoption, instead of money, the price is blood. Throughout scripture we see that there is no remission or atonement of Sin against God without the shedding of blood.

Throughout scripture we see examples, or types given to show, teach, or prophesy of a greater anti type, or the fulfillment of the example.

One of these anti-types can be found in the mosaic law given to the Israelites. They were commanded to sacrifice animals for atonement. The shedding of blood, was required as a offering for sin. Did God actually delight in the killing of these animals? Did these sacrifices somehow appease some sort of blood lust for an angry vengeful god? As Paul would say.. Certainly Not! Then what was it all about?

Isaiah 1, starting in verse 11. This is a vision God gave Isaiah concerning Judah and Jerusalem during the time of Uzziah, and Hezekiah

These were all ordinances that God put forth to the Israelite's for them to do. God commanded them to

sacrifice bulls and lambs, and here he is saying he has had enough! Just like how the Judaizers here in Galatia, completely missed the reason and the purpose of the law and saw it as a way to make themselves righteous. The Israelite's were missing the point of the sacrifices. And while they were keeping God's commandments to Sacrifice animals, they were not living a life as God desired thus making the whole thing void. For remember, if you live by the law and fail to do one thing, you are guilty of all. They were keeping the sacrifice part, but failed in a life living for God.

But instead of sacrifices God says, in verse 17..Learn to do good, seek justice, rebuke the oppressor, defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow if you are willing and obedient.

So now lets go to Hebrews 10, starting in verse 1.

We see that all of these things were just shadows of the things to come. They were the anti-types of Christ. The sacrifices never took away their sins, the law never justified them before God. They were given to drive a person's heart and mind toward God, to show the ugliness of sin, and that the punishment of sin is death. Blood must be spilled, for it is the ransom fee of our souls. All of these things were to point to God's holiness, and the coming messiah.

The sacrifices point to Christ, as it says in Revelations.. the Lamb slain before the foundation of the world. All of that to show, that there is a price to our adoption, and it has been payed once for all, by Christ.

Paul has slowly been escalating his argument up to this point, earlier in chapter 3 he says that those who are of faith are sons of Abraham. And here in our text today he says, For you are all sons of God, through faith in Jesus Christ!

We all have a physical identity. We all take traits from our parents, we look and act in ways that they do. I have traits of my physical parents, my identity as a person has been imprinted on me by them. And in much the same way, is our spiritual identity. We are, who our father is.

The Jews found their identity in their being the offspring of Abraham, they found their identity in the practice of the law. But just like with the sacrifices, they missed the point. Being physical children was not what it was about, that was all just a shadow, a type, pointing to something greater. And now the fulfillment has come, the anti type, the seed, the true lamb.

Verse 27 says, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ, have put on Christ. We are now son's of God. He is our father, and just like our physical parents give us our human identity, we have a spiritual identity in our Father, and his Son Jesus Christ.

This is another way that the promise is greater then the law. Our identity is God, and just as we can not choose, nor control our physical identity given to use through genetics, we can't control our identity given to us by faith in Christ. It happens to us, no choice of our own. Children do not go to the adoption agency looking at all the available parents and choosing one. It is the same with our spiritual adoption. We don't choose our father, we are born into sin by our father Adam. But God chooses us,

adopts us, pays the price for us by the shedding of his only son's blood, making us new creatures, part of the family of God and heirs to the blessings and promises of our father. The Jews thought that the law, and being the offspring of Abraham made them children of God, but they missed the whole point.

Throughout this letter to the churches in Galatia as we have seen the past few weeks Paul has argued that the promises and adoption only comes to those who are faithful, in Chapter 2 he shows justification is by faith, union with Christ is by faith, and so far in chapter 3 he says the blessings of Abraham come by faith, and the promise of the spirit is received by faith.

Everything God promises, and has to offer comes by faith and our adoption is no different. Just as how we can not choose who our parents are, we can not work our way into adoption. No matter how a person may work, or what they may do for another person that not make them a part of that family. So it is the same with the law. If I started working for Teresa, living in her house, cleaning, cooking, feeding Lucy, that would not make me her child no matter how well I do all those things. It is the same with the law, we can not work our way to become children of God. By Being circumcised, observing dietary laws, observing feasts, and Sabbaths. That does not make us a child of God. The only way to become a child and legal heir, is by adoption which is only granted by the parent.

So now having been adopted. We are children of God, and our identity is with our new family. we should have the traits of our father,. And please, I don't mean things like being all knowing, or all powerful. What I mean by that, is that we are to be holy, as our father is holy. It is who we are as his children.

Just as he said in Isaiah, we should cease to do evil, learn to do good, seek justice, rebuke the oppressor, defend the fatherless, plead for the widow. But we do not do these things because a law tells us to, we do these things for we desire to please our father. We do these things out of a love for our father, it is who we are, our identity is in him. We are his children.

In Galatians 3 verse 28. we see who makes up the adopted family of God. It says, For those who are sons of God, there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female for you are all one in Christ Jesus and if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promises.

Paul is pretty much saying the same thing here he has said before, but taking it one step further. Before he said all who are of faith are sons of Abraham, then he says we are sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ. And just so there isn't any confusion he says that it does not matter your race, your social standing, your gender. If you are in Christ, then you are an heir.

God's adopted family is from all walks of life, every nation just as he promised Abraham. The Jews thought it was just them, they believed that they alone were God's children. But as Paul shows here it is by faith we are Children of God and that has been God's plan from the foundation of the world.

We all have a father, either we are children of wrath, or we are adopted children of God. Which are you?