

The Gospel in Galatians Lesson 8 4Q 2011

From Slaves to Heirs

SABBATH

Read first paragraph – “Paul tells...” thoughts?

What are the “rights and privileges” of the sons and daughters of God?

I could think of lots of privileges but I was having a hard time thinking of “rights”? While I list some of the privileges I thought of, can you think of any “rights”?

- The privilege to love others
- The privilege to know God
- The privilege to give of ourselves to bless others
- The privilege of being transformed in character to be like Jesus
- The privilege of fulfilling a role/purpose in God’s cause
- The privilege of sharing the truth about God with others
- The privilege of seeing others freed from sin
- The privilege of eternal life
- The privilege of sharing our story of deliverance with sinless beings in the hereafter
- The privilege of experiencing God’s love
- The privilege of truth, and understanding of the GC
- The privilege of returned self-control/governance
- We have privilege of a closer intimacy with God than if mankind had never sinned –
 - Christ taken humanity, is part of this creation,
 - if your father president you would have a closer connection,
 - In foxhole, in combat, bonds are forged, we have suffered with Christ and fought the good fight of faith with him. This creates a closer connection with God than the unfallen beings experience

- While we may value and appreciate our soldiers who have fought for our freedoms, we don't have the same closeness and bonds that those who have fought together experience. The onlooking universe will be like those of us who benefit and appreciate, and support our troops, but those doing the fighting get a closer relationship with each other that we don't experience.

Read second paragraph – “No matter...” thoughts?

What is the strength of this example? Do we have to be perfect in all we do?

Read last paragraph, “We, too,...” thoughts?

Was mankind, in Eden, created as God's heir or did mankind only become an heir after sin and Christ's victory?

- Did mankind, in Eden, have an “inheritance” from God?
- Was earth given as mankind's inheritance from God?
- What would cause mankind to lose that inheritance?
- What would restore the inheritance?
- If a son has an illness, while he is sick is he still an heir to his father's kingdom?
- If he dies before his father dies, is he still an heir, will he inherit the kingdom?
- So, could we say, that mankind is an heir to God, we have an inheritance from our Heavenly Father, but we are all sick, terminal, and can only inherit our inheritance if we experience healing through Christ?
- Or, is it more accurate to say, we are not heirs, we are not sons of God, until we are first healed and then we become heirs?
- Is receiving our inheritance, then a legal process, or a healing process?

SUNDAY

Read Galatians 3:26-29:

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.

Thoughts?

Heirs according to the promise – the promise to do what? To heal us! Thus we are heirs because we don't die eternally and thus can inherit what God has for us. Those who don't accept Christ and what He has accomplished are not heirs, because they won't inherit the kingdom because they die! It is not a legal process but a healing process!

Read third paragraph, "Paul's use..." thoughts?

What do you think of the idea of conferred? What does it mean to confer something?

grant or bestow (a title, degree, benefit, or right): *moves were made to **confer** an honorary degree **on** her.*

Is this the Biblical definition of what it means to be clothed in Christ's righteousness?

What does the Bible say?

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, ² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death. ³ For what the law was powerless to do in that it was weakened by the sinful nature, God did by sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful man to be a sin

offering. And so he condemned sin in sinful man, ⁴ in order that the **righteous requirements of the law might be fully met in us**, who do not live according to the sinful nature but according to the Spirit. Romans 8:1-3

God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him **we might become the righteousness of God**. 2Cor 5:21

Here is how one of the founders of our church described what it means to be clothed in Christ:

This robe, woven in the loom of heaven, has in it not one thread of human devising. **Christ in His humanity wrought out a perfect character, and this character He offers to impart to us.** "All our righteousness are as filthy rags." Isaiah 64:6. Everything that we of ourselves can do is defiled by sin. But the Son of God "**was manifested to take away our sins**; and in Him is no sin." Sin is defined to be "the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:5, 4... By His perfect obedience He has made it possible for every human being to obey God's commandments. **When we submit ourselves to Christ, the heart is united with His heart, the will is merged in His will, the mind becomes one with His mind, the thoughts are brought into captivity to Him; we live His life. This is what it means to be clothed with the garment of His righteousness.** Then as the Lord looks upon us He sees, not the fig-leaf garment, not the nakedness and deformity of sin, but His own robe of righteousness, which is perfect obedience to the law of Jehovah. {COL 311.4}

Is this "conferred" or is this "imparted"? The Bible truth is so much more wonderful that we are commonly taught. We can actually become "partakers of the divine nature"!

Read bottom red section, "Dwell..." thoughts?

Is this true? In what way?

- Both human
- Both tempted by sin
- Both suffered
- Both born into the earth from a sinful mother (except Adam and Eve)
- Both Christ and saved have unity with God
- Christ and saved reign on thrones in heaven

In what way is it not true?

- Christ never sinned, we are healed from sin
- Christ is fully God and fully man, we are only human
- Christ was pre-existent, we have a beginning
- Christ loves always – we don't

TUESDAY

Read first paragraph, “Paul’s choice...” thoughts?

This is one reason that God may have chosen this time, are there perhaps other reasons, not from history, but from the Bible that God chose this time to come?

While the Bible is a book to reveal God to man, whom did God choose to tell this story through? Is the Bible narrative told through the Chinese, Aborigine, Anglo-Saxon, Native American? No, the Bible narrative is told through Abraham’s descendants.

Is there a reason, related to Abraham’s descendants, that God chose this particular time in history for Christ to come?

Are humans the only intelligent beings involved in the war between Christ and Satan? No, intelligent beings in heaven are also watching (Job chapter 1, Daniel chapter 10).

So, from the vantage point of heaven, what was different about the Jewish people when Christ came than previously in their history?

This was the first time that they appeared to an outside observer to be adhering to the script, following the manual, applying the blueprint to their lives. They observed Sabbath, kept the feasts, followed the dietary restrictions even straining gnats out of their food, paid tithe, no longer sacrificed to false gods. They, for all outward appearances, seemed to finally be onboard with God's plan.

Now, why might this be an important time for Christ to come? What was revealed?

That obedience to the rules, without the true picture of God makes no difference, that obedience for the wrong reasons makes one God's enemy! That outward conformity is not what God wants, what God wants is a transformed heart!

I would suggest, that God could not provide all the evidence He needed to provide had He come to earth, to Israel, at a prior time in history. Had He come when they were worshipping Baal, it would have not taught this lesson when they rejected Him.

Read fifth paragraph, "The phrase 'born under the law...' thoughts?

What do you understand the law here to mean? It depends on how you understand law – Do you understand God's law to be like Imperial Rome, an imposed law upon His subjects which He must enforce, or do you understand God's law to be the law of love, the construction protocols He built life to operate upon.

If you believe the law is imposed then you believe he was born under legal condemnation, the legal death sentence. But if you believe the law is natural, then you understand Paul is saying

that Jesus was born, under the “law of sin and death.” That He was born with a humanity that was infected and damaged by Satan’s principle of selfishness, a humanity that could tempt Him to act in self-interest, which was evidenced in Gethsemane, and confirmed by Hebrews 2:14 and James 1:13-15.

Read last paragraph, “It was necessary...” thoughts?

When one makes the mistake of accepting the little horn’s change in God’s law from the law of love, the natural law He built the universe to run upon, to the imposed law idea, then one misconstrues what Christ did and sees things through a legal lens.

Now we believe Christ did become our substitute, but not to achieve some court room, legal requirement, but to achieve the cleansing of mankind from sin and selfishness.

Notice, because of the false idea of God’s law accepted by penal substitution theology, how they say, “He met the justice of the law, which required the death of the sinner...”

Does the law require the death of the sinner? What does the law require?

If the law is like Rome – an imposed law, what does that type of law require when it is broken? Punishment – in this case the death of the lawbreaker. It is satisfied by having the penalty, for breaking the law paid.

If the law is like God’s law, the law He built life to operate upon, what does that law require? That we are put back in harmony with it, for in no other way can it be satisfied – for in no other way can life exist.

How did one of the founders of our church see it?

- **The law requires righteousness,--a righteous life, a perfect character;** and this man has not to give. He cannot meet the claims of God's holy law. But Christ, coming to the earth as man, lived a holy life, and developed a perfect character. These He offers as a free gift to all who will receive them. {DA 762.2}
- **But the law requires that the soul itself be pure and the mind holy, that the thoughts and feelings may be in accordance with the standard of love and righteousness.**--RH, Apr 5, 1898. (2SM 211.) {2MCP 564.1}
- **The divine law requires us to love God supremely and our neighbor as ourselves.** {A New Life NL 32.1}
- **That which God required of Adam before his fall was perfect obedience to His law. God requires now what He required of Adam, perfect obedience, righteousness without a flaw, without shortcoming in His sight. God help us to render to Him all His law requires.** We cannot do this without that faith that brings Christ's righteousness into daily practice. {2SM 380.4}
 - If the law requires the death of the sinner, should we be praying “God help *us* render to Him all His law requires?”
- **His law requires your heart's supreme affection for your Maker. It requires you to do unto others as you would have them do to you.** {BEcho, February 15, 1889 par. 8}
- This is the voice of God to you, my brethren and sisters who profess to keep the law of God. **That law requires that you love your neighbor as yourself.** Are you doing it? {RH, March 11, 1884 par. 10}

- The Lord will give ample light to all who will be true and loyal to him, but he will show no more favor to Phariseism and self-righteousness today than when he walked in his humanity in our world. The soul that encourages an atmosphere of doubt, God cannot favor with constantly increasing grace. His mercy and the gracious influences of his Spirit remain the same for all who will receive them. His offer of salvation does not change. **It is man who changes his relationship to God.** Many place themselves where they cannot recognize his grace and his salvation. ***They are under a delusion as to what constitutes Christianity.*** **And while man refuses to become pure, holy, and undefiled, as God's law requires him to do, he is walking away from Christ.** {RH, February 15, 1898 par. 10}
 - Imagine an HIV man and woman get together and have a child – what did the child do wrong? That is every human since Adam and Eve, born in sin and conceived in iniquity. We didn't do anything wrong, it is not our fault. But, even though the HIV baby is innocent, does it still have a terminal condition that if unremedied will kill it? That is also our situation. If the child grows up and there is a free remedy offered and the child refuses it will that be his/her fault? Yes, that is also our situation. What if a deceiver offers the child a false-remedy, and the child accepts the false remedy – what happens?
 - What happens when people accept the legal payment for their sins, because they haven't understood the real problem of sinfulness in the heart? They are under a delusion as to what constitutes Christianity!
- **...his law requires us to love God supremely, and our neighbor as ourselves.** {ST, November 23, 1891 par. 5}
- **The law requires us to present to God a holy character. It demands of men today just what it**

demanded of Adam in Eden,--perfect obedience, perfect harmony with all its precepts in all relations of life, under all circumstances and conditions. {ST, May 30, 1895 par. 2}

- **God's law requires that justice and right be exercised between man and his fellow man; it requires that we shall not injure our neighbor in his property, his feelings, his health, or his good name. It requires compassion for the afflicted, even if he be our enemy, that in all our associations with our fellow beings we shall show the same love and care that we would wish to have exercised toward ourselves. {ST, January 7, 1897 par. 3}**

So if the law requires us to love our enemies, wouldn't that be true of God? Then do you see the fallacy of teaching that God hates, or inflicts torture upon His enemies!

- **Christ came to this world to live the law and represent the character of God, that the delusions which Satan had brought upon the world might be dispelled.** In the sermon on the mount, He who gave the law became an expositor of the law. That sermon, so full of what it means to love and obey God, is the unfolding of His character. **The law is shown to be a representation of God's character**, that man may see that he must render obedience to the law if he would become a member of the royal family, a child of the heavenly King. **This law requires nothing short of perfect spiritual obedience.** {ST, February 24, 1898 par. 5}

I put in the search engine of the EGW CD "Law, requires, death" and there is not one place she says the law requires death. This idea of the law requiring death is another distortion based off accepting Imperial Rome's distortion of God's law!

How can experience what the law does require?

- While the law is holy, the Jews could not attain righteousness by their own efforts to keep the law. The disciples of Christ must obtain righteousness of a different character from that of the Pharisees, if they would enter the kingdom of heaven. **God offered them, in His Son, the perfect righteousness of the law. If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ, then the very life of God, His love, would dwell in them, transforming them into His own likeness; and thus through God's free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires.** {MB 54.2}

Where is the law? In the believer, we don't get a new record erased of sins, we get a new heart cleansed of sinfulness!

Why do so many get confused about what the law requires? Because they have accepted the little horn's version of what God's law is like, an imposed law, and then conceive of God having to impose penalties for breaches in the law. Then they misunderstand the meaning of what they read. Consider the following:

- **Christ saw the helpless condition of the race, and he came to redeem them by living the life of obedience the law requires**, and by paying in his death the penalty of disobedience. He came to bring us the message and means of deliverance, an assurance of salvation, not through the abrogation of the law, but through obedience made possible by his merits. {RH, April 29, 1902 par. 10}
 [the law requires a life of obedience, there is a penalty for sin, but the law doesn't require sin be punished, only that the infection of sin be destroyed so that a life of obedience could be obtained. Thus lawlessness results in death and Christ could only restore a life of obedience into humanity by destroying the carnal nature He assumed – thus suffering the penalty sin brought.]

What does the law require? Does the law require the death of the sinner? NO! The law requires we be healed and restored to righteousness! Why? What does the law of respiration require? It requires we breathe! If someone breaks the law, trying to commit suicide and ties a plastic bag over their head, and they pass out, but are not yet dead, and someone removes the plastic bag, does the law of respiration require they now be killed? No, the law requires one breathes!

So mankind is infected with a terminal condition of selfishness, the law requires righteousness, because that is the basis upon which life is built. Christ could only put mankind back in harmony with God's design principles, by destroying the infection of selfishness, which is why He died!

WEDNESDAY

Read first paragraph, thoughts?

What is it that held us in bondage? Sinful nature, lies of Satan – so what is the price to free us? The truth which destroys lies, and a new character, which Christ achieved!

Read third paragraph, “We often speak...” thoughts – this is a metaphor, but what happens when we take a metaphor and apply it concretely? We get misled, this happens when those who take the parable of Lazarus and the rich man and apply it concretely.

Those who see a legal problem and solution in the plan of salvation, use this metaphor concretely and as evidence of a legal requirement in the solution for sin. But they forget it is a metaphor, written to whom?

This was written to the Galatians, who were being infected by Judiazers, who were suggesting that Gentile converts didn't have the same rights, privileges, promises, inheritance as the Jews, unless they converted to Judaism, and practice the

Jewish customs, including circumcision. Paul, uses the metaphor of adoption, not to teach the plan of salvation for humanity is a legal process, but to show that one didn't have to be a Jew to be part of God's family and an heir of the promises to Abraham. In other words, one didn't have to get circumcised and practice feasts days – what one had to do was accept Christ and experience a new heart/mind/character. Thus the “adopted” son had all the same “rights and privileges” as the biological son. So this undercut the argument of the Judiazers who were trying to mislead the people!

THURSDAY

Read Galatians 4:9-11, thoughts?

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? ¹⁰ You are observing special days and months and seasons and years! ¹¹ I fear for you, that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you.

The lesson argues that some mistakenly use this in regard to the weekly Sabbath, when it applies only to the ceremonial law, what do you think?

Here is my paraphrase:

But now that you have come to know God, as revealed by Jesus (or more importantly, now that Christlike character has been developing within you and you are known as God's children), how could you possibly turn back to the dark, powerless, destructive beliefs and practices of your former lives? Do you wish to have your minds destroyed and be enslaved by superstition and ignorance all over again? ¹⁰ You are actually observing ceremonial holidays as if somehow such observances could heal the mind, remove selfishness and guilt or restore the character to

Christlikeness. 11 I can hardly believe it. I am beginning to wonder if all my time with you has been wasted.

Do you think I miss the meaning? If this is the meaning, then wouldn't the weekly Sabbath be included? In other words, if we keep the weekly Sabbath as a means to save ourselves we have missed the point and are lost, correct? Or put another way, does observance of the weekly Sabbath cure sinfulness?

Read bottom pink section – thoughts?

MONDAY

Read Galatians 4:1-3- thoughts?

What do you hear? What does it mean?

Here is my paraphrase:

Galatians 4:1 What I am trying to explain to you is that as long as the heir remains immature, he is really no different from a slave because he needs someone to supervise his behavior, make his decisions and guide his actions, even though he owns the entire estate. 2 He doesn't have self-governance so he needs the guardians and trustees to protect him from himself until such time he can handle his own affairs. 3 Likewise, when we were childlike in character and immature in our thinking we had no self-control and were slaves to selfish impulses.

Thoughts?

FRIDAY

Read top paragraph, "thoughts?"

Read and discuss questions 1-3