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Sunday School Lesson

TOPIC:

“Children of God, by Faith”

Galatians 3:26-4:7

VERSE DISCOVERY: Galatians 3:26-4:7 (KJV, Public Domain)

Prepare

- Grab a bunch of before and after pictures. This can be of people (mind how you represent people before others), of room makeovers, DIY projects, etc. Post these pictures around the room or hold them up for everyone to see. Ask, *What are the main differences each of these sets of pictures represent?* (Give the class space and time to answer.)

Some answers may allude to the fact of how much better the after pictures look as opposed to the before pictures. Things look different now then they previously had before.

The same is true of us when we enter a relationship with God through Jesus Christ our Lord. We are not the same as we used to be. We have been transformed into something beautiful. No matter who we used to be or where we came from, now we belong to God. We are His children, by faith. We may not have all started off on the same foot or with a certain background. But where we end up in God’s family matters more! Making our “after” much better than our “before”.

- Search online for Child of God object lessons to lead into the lesson.

Explore – Lesson Available on pages 5-11

Being a child of God really is something wonderful and special. There is no other feeling that can substitute the knowing that you have been adopted into His glorious family. Knowing that despite your background, ethnicity, or whatever – when God looks at the believer, all He sees is what Christ has already done for us. He doesn’t see color. He doesn’t see race. He doesn’t see anything that divides us. All He sees is Jesus. Those who believe in Him and accept Him as Savior have, by faith, been made children of God.

From the beginning, God has always wanted more. An article I previously wrote titled, *God Wanted More*, explains it better. It reads:

“When we think of the vastness of God’s power stretching from history to history, and eternity to eternity it can leave one with an awe-inspired feeling. As I read through the Word I am always left in amazement the strategy and planning God did to bring certain events into place, including our salvation.

When God first called Abraham out to establish a people for Himself through him, God did not rest in the satisfaction of just having one people or nation as His. He wanted it all. He wanted the world.

Isaiah 49:6 tells us, "It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth." Instead of the words "light thing," the New King James Version says, "It is too small a thing" which means the same thing but shows us a deeper level of God's plan and His heart. It wasn't enough for God to be content with the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ, to touch and affect the lives of a single race or family. God wanted more!

God's thinking for salvation was too big in scope and depth for His heart to settle for reaping the souls of just a single kindred or nationality of folk. As far as His love (which can never be measured by human standards) reaches – that's how far He wants to grab a hold of people and love them as His own. He couldn't rest with just saving some, but He wanted the sum of humanity to have a chance to experience this awesome deliverance.

God always wanted more. His intention was that all the families of the earth be exposed to this offer of salvation (see Genesis 12:1-3). I don't know about you but I'm glad God wasn't satisfied with "some." In His high degree of love for people, His thinking was bigger. Because of that, everyone has the opportunity to be in the "sum" of the saved; to be a part of that heavenly number if they will answer His call.

You, my friends, are the "more" that God has always wanted. You were always in God's plan. You were always on God's mind from the beginning. You have always mattered to God and He wants you in that heavenly number. (©WordForLifeSays.com)

And, to get to be included in that "more", faith in Christ was all that was needed. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," Galatians 3:26.

Activities

- Using the **Journal Pages**, reflect and write about being a child of God. Children can discuss what's the best part about being a child of God while adults can write for their personal remembrance what God's Word and other beautiful sources such as song lyrics say, declaring us as God's children. What this does is it helps to keep us focused more on what God says we are than anything else. And sometimes, that reminder is greatly needed.

- In the **Draw the Scene** section, students can draw or cut out of old magazines many different people, showing no matter who you are or where you come from, you too can be a child of God through faith because in Christ, we are all one!
- Younger students can also make **Playing Dough People**. Using many colors of moldable dough, students can make many different people or characters to symbolize diversity. No matter who you are or where you come from, you too can be a child of God, by faith, because in Christ, we are all one! In the eyes of God, we are all the same.
- Printable materials such as **Word Search, Crosswords, and more** are available on site for those who just want to work with printed materials.

Review

- Commit to memory the base verse from the lesson: ***“For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Galatians 3:26***
- Fill out the review sheet provided (page 12)
- Search online for a Bible memory or review game

Life

In Christ, you are a child of God! Your right now position is secured in what Christ has already done. Take time to meditate on several Bible verses that declare your sonship/daughter-ship before the heavenly Father. Let God’s own word speak to your heart and reassure you of your status in Him. (Some suggested Bible verses are John 1:12; Romans 8:17; 1 John 3:1-2, just to name a few).

TOPIC:

“Children of God, by Faith”

Galatians 3:26-4:7

VERSE DISCOVERY: Galatians 3:26-4:7 (KJV, Public Domain)

The book of Galatians has long been a favorite of mine. In it, we see the freedom Christ secured for us really come to the forefront. We see within its pages grace winning out over laws and rituals. Held in the words thereof is the promise that no matter our background, race, sex, or whatever – if we are in Christ, then we are members of the family of God by faith and heirs according to the promise.

The Apostle Paul was taken aback at how soon those in the church of Galatia had allowed others in the form of false teachers infect the faith they had in Jesus Christ (see Galatians 1:6) and he testified before them that the gospel he preached; those blessed words of faith he delivered unto them was not because they were taught to him or received from man, but it was by an actual revelation of Jesus Christ (see Galatians 1:11-12).

After giving a brief testimony of his own previous dealings regarding his former religion which he was so zealous for and how he persecuted the church, he stated that he too was called by grace (see Galatians 1:13-14). Paul then went on to teach that even though he and his fellow countrymen may be Jews by nature, they too have to believe in Jesus Christ “that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified (Galatians 2:15-16).

The prevailing issue coming from these false teachers which Paul wrote to instruct of revolved around the idea of circumcision. In the Old Testament, we read that God entered a covenant relationship with Abraham. One of the particulars of that relationship was that all males be circumcised on the eighth day (see Genesis 17:9-14). This was under their old order of rule keeping and rituals that are not found in an active relationship through Jesus Christ.

Some men called Judaizers (false teachers) attempted to add works of the flesh and law (such as the issue of circumcision and other like measures) to the finished work of the Spirit performed through Christ. These men argued that grace was not enough in order for a Greek

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(Gentile) to be saved. They must first follow all the steps of protocol that Moses laid out in his law, including circumcision, in order to be a true Christian.

That, my friends, is a total contradiction of the very word of grace itself which speaks of God's unmerited favor. When something is "unmerited" it is, by definition, undeserved, meaning there is nothing one can do to gain the favor of it or earn it themselves.

Paul taught at one point in the book of Acts saying, "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," (13:39). If the law and adherence to those rituals could have saved mankind once and for all, then Jesus Christ would have never needed to come to this earth, be born a babe in a manger just to die on that old rugged cross bearing the sins of the world. Earlier in Galatians, we read that Christ already did the work that redeemed us and freed us from the curse: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law..." (Galatians 3:13). Therefore, Paul is writing this letter to set the record straight.

LESSON SUMMARY

Galatians 3:26-29 "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

The disputes that came by way of those Judaizers left confusion in the Galatian's spiritual pathway of faith. In the verse just prior to these above Paul states, "But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster," (Galatians 3:25) giving a final answer to his telling of the purpose of the law before moving to today's subject.

Faith is the key. Coming to Jesus with all our wrongs and trusting Him to heal and forgive is a walk of faith no matter where you or your family hails from. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," (Ephesians 2:8). Now, that one has received that gift of God, that gift of salvation, they are "**all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.**"

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When Jesus transformed their lives with His saving blood they have been renewed, changed, and adopted into the family of God. They have shed off the old garments of self, sin, and following the course of the world and the dictates of evil and the flesh and have **“put on Christ.”** A great exchange took place then and takes place now in the individual that turns to Jesus in faith.

Please note: It is noted, **“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”** Baptism symbolized the shedding off of the old life and the taking on of the new; it stood for the remission of their sins (see Acts 2:38). In it, they were identifying with Christ.

Thus, through their faith, they aligned themselves with Christ. Why now do they wish to add unprofitable rituals such as circumcision in the mix? Although they may be **“Greek” (Gentile)** by birth, they are Christians by rebirth. To be a Christian is to be of Christ with no added ingredients to the mix.

Paul recognized this and earlier taught, “That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith,” (Galatians 3:14). Freedom came by way of the promise that was laid out before the law (read Galatians 3:14-18). This was now a faith walk and there is no difference in God’s eyes who gets to walk it. To Him **“there is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”**

God does not focus on one’s ethnic background to decide if they are right to be called His. He doesn’t let their social status, gender, or anything that man may try to discriminate against or use as a counterbalance of some pre-prescribed acceptance. In a culture where most were judged on these divisive measures, this was good news indeed.

Since God doesn’t make a difference between the two, there is no need to make the Gentiles adhere to traditions that would make them Jews first. They didn’t need to become Jewish for God to save them. God was saving them right where they are through faith in Jesus Christ.

And, because of that, they are now **“one in Christ Jesus.”** There is no delineation in God’s family. They are a unified people under Him, secured in their relationship in Christ. Everyone who believes in Him and has accepted Him as their Savior is now participants in His

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promise. We read, **“If ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”**

An heir, by nature, is one who receives an inheritance or entitlement. Notice the word **“seed”** does not have an “s” on it. There is one seed identified with Abraham to whom the promise comes through and that is Jesus Christ (see Galatians 3:16). In Galatians 3:19 we see the law being in effect until the “seed should come to whom the promise was made.” Those who come under that seed, who come through **“Christ”** are now privileged to be considered also as **“Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.”** Other portions of Scripture support this by saying, “But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name,” (John 1:12; see also Ephesians 3:6 and 1 John 3:1).

Therefore, the need for circumcision in order to become a member of the family of God is not an issue and one is not to predicate their salvation on it or any other measures of the law. As a matter of fact, to set the record straight Paul taught in Romans 4:11 of Abraham regarding the covenant of circumcision that, “He received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.” In other words, circumcision was just a sign of the relationship of faith that Abraham already had with God before he was circumcised thereby making him “the father of all them that believe.”

God is looking for a faith relationship found only in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, as a marker of who is and is not a child of God. The Galatians need not worry about adhering to or adding stipulations of the law (such as circumcision) to declare they are His children.

Galatians 4:1-5 “Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”

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To further delve into his “**heir**” description, Paul takes a scenario from life they would see play out around them and connects it to the spiritual truth we have in Him.

A young “**child**” does not possess the knowledge and the wherewithal to control and make impactful decisions regarding an estate that would be laid up for his future. As a member of the family and inheritor of all, he still had to wait until he was of proper age and understanding before the keys, so to speak, of all could be placed solely in his hands.

While he was still growing in understanding during his upbringing he would be placed “**under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.**” Until his father saw that the mature and complete time that his son would be able to take on the responsibility of the upkeep of all he had come, the son was placed under these individuals, similar to that of a “**servant,**” to teach him the ins and outs, the rights and wrongs of everything.

The law acted the same way. “The law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith,” (Galatians 3:24). And, when God deemed the time to be right, “**God sent forth his Son, made of a woman...**”

For centuries the children of Israel waited for the appearing of the Messiah. At the perfect point in history God sent Jesus Christ just as He had promised (see Gen. 3:15, 12:3; 2 Sam. 12-13; Is. 7:14 – just to name a few). Tracked down the path of forty-two generation (Matthew 1:1-17), He came to be the Savior of the world. God’s timing for everything is perfect and the events that ushered Jesus into the world to bring us to this life of faith were and are fully supported by Him.

God left no stone unturned about how the ins and outs of this plan of His coming would come into effect. God takes eternity seriously. His goal is to see that as many spiritual children are made heirs of that promise as possible which is fulfilled through our Savior Jesus Christ.

When Jesus was born physically on this earth He was “**made of a woman, made under the law.**” Jesus came into this world fully human and fully divine. As a human, although He was the Son of God, He willingly put Himself under the same constraints of the law as any other Jewish human (see Matthew 5:17).

“**To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.**” But unlike other humans, Jesus’ purpose on earth for being under the law was

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to **“redeem them that were under the law.”** “For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh,” (8:3; see also John 1:14). Through His death on the cross, He overcame sin, which the law was unable to permanently do, and for those who believe in Him they are now justified (see Acts 13:39 and Galatians 2:16). They have been redeemed and made heirs of the promise, **“adoption of sons,”** without those previously discussed works of the law such as circumcision.

Galatians 4:6-7 “And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.”

Because of what Jesus did, and because those who made that decision that they needed Christ as their Savior accepted Him as their own, their status in this world has changed from being mere men and woman to being considered as **“sons”** of God, or children of God. They have received of His **“Spirit”** by faith.

The Bible supports this in other verses telling us, “In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory,” (Ephesians 1:13-14). The Holy Spirit is the guarantee of our inheritance in Him. Not circumcision or other outwardly rituals. As a child of God, we are covered and endowed by His Spirit. His Spirit didn’t come because of circumcision but because the gospel was heard and responded to through belief.

Thus, our relationship with God blesses us to be able to cry out to Him, **“Abba, Father.”** As carriers of the Spirit of His Son in our hearts we are now a child of God, not a **“servant,”** and as such we are able to call out to our heavenly Father because we are in Him (see also Romans 8:15); because there is a heavenly bond between God and those that are His. And, since we are now considered **“a son”** we are **“then an heir of God through Christ”**; children of God, by faith!

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CONCLUSION

Everybody has the same opportunity to be saved. There are no barriers. There are no walls except the ones we build ourselves. His gift of salvation is available to all. You just have to accept it for yourself.

Remember, “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree: That the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith,” (Galatians 3:13-14). Therefore, making us children of God, by faith.

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Galatians 3:26-4:7

Please Answer the Review Questions Below

1. “For ye are all the _____ of God by faith in Christ Jesus.” Gal. 3:26
A. Blessed B. Heirs C. Children D. None
2. “For as many of you as have been baptized into _____ have put on _____.” Gal. 3:27
A. The Spirit B. Christ C. Water D. None
3. “There is neither Jew or Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all _____ in Christ Jesus.” Gal. 3:28
A. Welcome B. Together C. Blessed D. None
4. “And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the _____.” Gal. 3:29
A. Promise B. Word C. Law D. None
5. “God sent forth his _____, made of a woman, made under the law.” Gal. 4:4
A. Prophet B. Son C. Children D. None
6. “To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the _____ of sons.” Gal. 4:5
A. Rights B. Inheritance C. Adoption D. None
7. “Wherefore thou art no more a _____, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.” Gal. 4:7
A. Gentile B. Slave C. Bondman D. None

