

Sons & Heirs

Galatians 4:1-7 Titus 3:1-8 Luke 12:1-7

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St Paul spends the first four chapters of the book of Galatians teaching us that salvation is found only in the Lord Jesus Christ, and never in our own good works. Over and over again, in many different ways, Paul emphasizes and stresses that salvation is by grace *alone*, through faith *alone*, in Christ *alone*. You could not earn your own salvation if you tried, there is not one good work you could do that God would accept. This verse serves as a good summary and theme verse for the book of Galatians, this is from chapter 2

We know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. Galatians 2:16

We are completely dependent on the Son of God for salvation, in fact that is why God the Father sent His Son into the world. Jesus is the Savior that the Father has sent for you.

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. Galatians 4:4-5

God sent His Son, born of Mary, to be under the Law of God for us and in our place. *The Law of God is the 10 Commandments*. The Law of God requires two things of you, both of which **you could never achieve**; and both of which **Christ achieved perfectly** for us.

First, the Law of God requires *perfect obedience* every moment of every day in thought, word, and deed. The Commandments of God are not suggestions – God *expects you to perfectly obey them*. When you fail to obey them, you sin. That includes your thoughts, your words, and your actions. That disobedience separates you from God and brings guilt and death into your life.

So God sent His Son to take our place under the Commandments. Jesus took your place under the Law of God in order to live a perfectly obedient life in thought, word, and deed. He did it for you, and in your place. His perfectly obedient life is credited to you through faith and God considers you to perfectly obey Him; you are declared to be holy and righteous.

The second thing the Law of God requires is *punishment for sin*. Anyone who breaks the Commandments of God will die. You stand guilty of breaking the Law in God's courtroom; you are caught *red-handed* in your disobedience to God's Commandments. *The wages of sin is death.*

So God sent His Son Jesus into the world to take the punishment for your sin upon Himself. Jesus is like an Old Testament sacrifice: our sins were put on Jesus and He dies ***for us, as our substitute***. God the Father accepts Jesus' sacrifice on the cross as *payment for your sin*, and the Law of God is satisfied.

The Law of God, the Ten Commandments, are perfectly fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus has met the requirements of the Law on your behalf, and ***you are redeemed***. You are set free to live a new life; a life in the Family of God as an adopted son or daughter!

But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of woman, born under the Law, to redeem those who were under the Law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. Galatians 4:4-5

Through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you now are considered a son and daughter of God. You have been baptized into His Name, and brought into His Family. He is your Father in Heaven who watches over you and cares about every detail of your life. In the Gospel lesson for today, Jesus taught us that the Father even knows the number of hairs on your head! Through faith in Christ, God is your Father in Heaven; you are a son and daughter and you have an inheritance in God's Family!

The Holy Spirit has been given to you so that you not only know God is your Father in Heaven, but you can approach Him in prayer as children normally approach their fathers.

Because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" Galatians 4:6

The Holy Spirit, the third person of the Holy Trinity, lives within you and empowers you for Christian living. He creates and nurtures your faith through the Word and the Sacraments. He has gifted and equipped you to live a holy and godly life. The Holy Spirit prompts you to pray to your Father in heaven.

Prayer is a gift of God that's given to His sons and daughters through faith in Christ. You have access to the Father in Heaven, knowing that He loves you and cares about you, and invites you into His presence to talk to Him. You boldly approach your Heavenly Father, without any fear, doubt, or worry whatsoever. You can pray for yourself, your family, and for all the people in your life. You pray that God's Name is hallowed, that His Kingdom comes, that His will is done. The Holy Spirit lives and works through you so that you can boldly and confidently approach your Father in heaven.

In addition, as a son or daughter of the Heavenly Father, through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you are an **heir**.

You are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God. Galatians 4:6

A heir gets an inheritance.

And inheritance is something you get when someone dies. God dies on the cross and you get gifts. Because of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, you receive all the blessings of eternal salvation. Your inheritance is described as the forgiveness of sins, eternal life, and all of God's promises of salvation. It is described as *a living hope, confident faith* in the resurrection of the dead on the Last Day. The Holy Spirit living within you is the down payment; the assurance of your inheritance!

One of the things that an inheritance highlights is the idea of grace; someone **gives** you something. In the same way, God's inheritance is not earned by your own good works, effort, nor merit. God's inheritance is given as a *gift of grace* because of the Lord Jesus Christ. God dies, and you get an inheritance. In God's "last will and [New] Testament" you are an **heir**; all the gifts of salvation are freely given to you!

What a huge blessing to be redeemed from the Law of God. We don't live our lives trying to earn God's favor by perfect obedience; and we don't live in guilt and terror of God punishing us for our sins. Jesus took our place under the Law of God; and He perfectly fulfilled it. Through faith in Jesus, you are considered part of God's family! You are a son or daughter who has complete access to the Father in Heaven! You are an heir -- all the blessings of salvation have been given to you because of Jesus' death on the cross!

Amen!

Heavenly father,
we thank you that you have adopted us into
your family through faith in your Son Jesus
Christ.

We rejoice in our redemption from the Law
of God.

Allow us to never fall back under the Law
and its demands and punishment;
but rather grant us faith to believe that
Jesus took our place and set us free from the
Law.

Send your Holy Spirit, so that we may live as
You sons and daughters.

Teach us to pray, and give us confidence in
the inheritance you have promised us.

We pray this by the power of the Holy
Spirit, and in the name of Jesus,
amen!

Galatians 4:1-7

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, 2 but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by his father. 3 In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world. 4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law, 5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. 6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!” 7 So you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Titus 3:1-8

Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work, 2 to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people. 3 For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. 4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, 5 he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. 8 The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to insist on these things, so that those who have believed in God may be careful to devote themselves to good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.

Luke 12:1-7

In the meantime, when so many thousands of the people had gathered together that they were trampling one another, he began to say to his disciples, “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. 2 Nothing is covered up that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. 3 Therefore whatever you have said in the dark shall be heard in the light, and what you have whispered in private rooms shall be proclaimed on the housetops. 4 “I tell you, my friends, do not fear those who kill the body, and after that have nothing more that they can do. 5 But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him! 6 Are not five sparrows sold for two pennies? And not one of them is forgotten before God. 7 Why, even the hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not; you are of more value than many sparrows.