

“Galatians Chapter 4”
By Brother Parrish Lee
Sunday, October 6th, 2013

Giving honor to God; the God—the only true and wise God. The Head of my life; the Head of *our* lives; without which, there is nothing that is, or that would be. Giving honor to *that* God; the God that makes a difference for us today. Giving honor to all those who went before us; all those who went before me. I will do that every time. If the devil ever tries to rear his head up, “Why do you do that? We’ve heard that enough.” No, we haven’t. This is not because any one of us here walked to keep the faith, because we put ourselves out there to see a work established for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to see souls saved and brought in. We are the recipients of somebody else’s labor. So, giving honor to those who went before me: Our founding Pastor, he and his family; our Bishop, he and his family; Pastor Wilson; Brother Kenneth and his family. Giving honor to their labor, who have done the work of God to see it at the point where it is right now. And, of course, giving honor to those of you who are in attendance, coming before the One True and Wise God that he might feed our souls and bless our lives; that we might be recipients of those blessings that we might go out and do His work. Amen.

It’ a beautiful time of worship. I’m very thankful for it.

If you’ve been here for the month of September, then you know that we are going over the Book of Galatians. It started off with Brother Tom Hanson, he preached chapter 1. Then there was Bob Heitzler, chapter 2, and Chris Ulrich, chapter 3. Our last two weeks, we actually had a revisit of those chapters. Today, it’s going to be chapter 4. We’re not going to cover every single verse, because we have a limited amount of time, and I don’t have that much knowledge.

Galatians 4:1-6 *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. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

If you will bow your heads with me for just a moment... Lord, we do come before you and thank you, because we know, as the song said, there is none like You. It has been the call down through the ages, from Moses to Isaiah to us here today: There is none like You, oh great God. we thank You for Your blessing that You have bestowed upon us today, to be able to wake up in our right mind and be able to walk across the floor, Lord; to be able to breathe in our lives. To have a time to come before You and worship. We ask now that You would add a blessing unto the reading of Your Word, As You said in Your Word, that it would go forth to do exactly what You have instructed it to do, and that it would not return unto You void. That it might nourish, us, Your people; that it might give us the blessing that we might be able to go out and do Your will. We thank You for all Your good and perfect gifts. And every one said, Amen.

So, we have talked about the Book of Galatians. Truly, saints, we hope that it’s been a blessing. We hope that you’ve been able to have something that has come and enriched your life

and made a difference, to be able to say, "I can go and read that book. I can go over those Scriptures; I can benefit from them. I can say, 'Lord, thank You so much for this time.'" We hope that has been the case. That's our earnest intent. We endeavor, we strive, to be able to do more of that; that we would all be able to add a blessing. If not from the pulpit, then from our seats. If not from our seats, then from our hearts. If not from our hearts, then on the telephone. We desire that we all would be a blessing, one to another. That is the will of God. Amen?

So, as we said, Brother Tom Hanson, he went over chapter 1. Bob Heirtzler, chapter 2, and Brother Chris, chapter 3. So, here we are: After Apostle Paul has talked about all those things that we discussed; after he said that he marveled that they were so soon removed from the Gospel, and, after he had withstood Peter, after he said that he stayed in the place so that he could get grounded in the faith... These are all things that were covered in the previous three chapters. After he talked about those that wanted to be under the Law; after he talked about curses, he's at the place where he's ending up chapter three on the subject of schoolmasters. Of course, you know that this was written as a letter, not as chapters and verses. If we were to read it as it was originally written, it would read straight through. There's a lot in there, but it was divided up into chapters and verses so that people like us would be able to break it down and remember it a little bit better. Thank you, thank you, thank you for doing that, because some of us have ADHD. If we could paint a picture today, we could see that the Galatians, they were Gentiles. As Gentiles, these Galatians knew that there was a certain history that these Jews had that went with them. They would look at that, and say, "Oh, we see that when they had this, then this is the result." These are the first generation Christians in Galatia; this is something all new to them. There were many things that were fighting for their affection. There were many things that were trying to get in there that, if they (the things) couldn't take them (the Galatians) this way, then they (the things) would take them (the Galatians) that way. "If I can't take you with a different Gospel, at least let me take you back to the Law. If I can't get you with the Law, then let me get some infighting going on." There were several things that were striving for their affection. As I said this was a first—well, some were being born into it—so, first and second generation Christians. These first and second generation Christians, if we were in their place, we would say, "Hey, anybody got a Bible?" Of course not; it hasn't been written. This was Galatia. "Well, what about Grandmom and Grandpop? Let's go get them, they were elders in the church." Well, this is first and second generation; this is new. "Well, let's look in the Yellow Pages and find a church near us." No, of course not, no telephone, no yellow pages, no electricity, no printing press, no newspapers, no. "Well, what about our cousins and friends who have been in seminary; maybe we can get those guys to come over." No, there was no seminary. This was first and second generation. These were people learning to be Christians. There are many things fighting for their affections. They didn't even have those people that complain on Monday and Tuesday morning about how boring church was that previous Sunday. They simply had what they had been told, and what they had learned previously. If an evangelist came through and taught them what the evangelist had learned; it all came from the Lord, Who taught the disciples, who taught the three-thousand, who taught the other people who wanted to hear this. So, as these things are passed on, and these things are fighting for their affections—his is an awesome time for a commercial. This is why it's important to have Bible Studies. If we didn't have Bible Studies, then we would need the letter written to the church of Waukegan, because we would need to have some of our own issues taken care of, specifically for us. Thank God for His Word. End of commercial—So, Apostle Paul is telling them that they don't need to be envious of others. He's telling them in verse 1, that the heir, as long as he is a child, differs nothing from

a servant, though he be lord of all. So, as children of God, they might look like anybody else, just like us, on the outside, we might look like anybody else, but there's a difference: While we are in our youth; while we are under tutors and governors, it says in verse 2, while we're learning and practicing, while we're honing, and while we're doing all these things, we know that we have an inheritance when we grow up. This is something that the Galatians were familiar with. This is something that all these regions were familiar with. If you had a large family, and you were the oldest, you were lucky, because you were going to get the most. If you were the oldest daughter, then you were going to get a nice dowry. So, they knew about an inheritance, and they knew that, when they reached a certain age, all of them were going to get something. Whenever their parents died, they would divvy up whatever the parents had, and whoever the oldest was, they would get the most. So they were familiar with inheritance, they were familiar with that idea. Paul had to tell them, you might think that you're like anybody else, and you might think that this servitude makes you servant, but you're more than a servant, because, while they're young, you see both the servant, and the son and the daughter, serving the parents; one has an inheritance, the other one, well, most times, they don't even sleep in the house. It doesn't matter how you got to be that son or daughter; it doesn't matter if you were born in that family, or whether you were, as the Bible talks about, adopted. We have received the Spirit of adoption (Romans 8:15). The thing that we have in common is the name. As they were given a name, they were given a name at birth. We are given that name when we are born again.

Galatians 4:7-9 *Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ. Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods. But now, after that ye have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage?*

He wants to make the distinction to the Galatians, lest they fall. We can all attest to the fact that before we came into the knowledge of God, we were doing all kinds of—well, I can't speak for everybody else, I can only speak for myself, but I was doing all kinds of crazy things. Before I was a son, before I knew God, I was doing all kinds of crazy things; specifically, serving other gods.

This doesn't mean that we don't continue to serve God. This means that the relationship is different. A servant serves God out of obligation, but a son, or daughter, they serve God out of love; they serve their mom or dad because they love them. They don't want to go anywhere else. Sometimes they don't even do it because they like it—I love my parents, that's why I would go and do whatever it is that they would ask me to do, even if I really don't want to. "Take out the trash; it's raining." I really don't want to, but I like living in this house, and I like eating in this house, so, I'll go take out the trash. If love is involved, then we stand more to lose. If love is involved, then you stand to lose so much more than just your inheritance. You also stand to lose relationship. We also stand to lose our relationship with God.

Galatians 4:12-16 *Brethren, I beseech you, be as I am; for I am as ye are: ye have not injured me at all. Ye know how through infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel unto you at the first. And my temptation which was in my flesh ye despised not, nor rejected; but received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus. Where is then the blessedness ye spake of? for I bear you record, that, if it had been possible, ye would have plucked out your own eyes, and have given them to me. Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth?*

Now, as Apostle Paul was sharing with them, he said, “You know, it’s been somewhat of a sacrifice.” He goes on into verse 13, and he tells them, “This wasn’t always the ideal situation, me coming up here. There’s been times when I was sick—and, let me tell you something, saints, just a little sidebar, if you’re really going to do ministry, you’re not always going to feel like doing ministry. You’re not always going to feel perfect. “You know, I worked out yesterday, and I ate the right foods, and I’m ready to take on the lion. I’ll go and minister and blah, blah blah...” No, sometimes you’re not going to feel good in your spirit; sometimes you’re going to feel low in your spirit; you’re going to feel like, “I don’t really have a whole lot to offer. I’m so busy; I’ve got other things to do.” Yes, sometimes you’re going to feel like, “I’ve got this need and that need, and I’ve got this and I’ve got that, but I’ve still got to make the phone call to encourage someone. I still need to make a visit. Maybe I can stop by. Maybe I can jot down a few things that could be encouraging, and I’ll slip them in the mail.” “Through infirmity of my flesh—I want you to know, Galatians, it ain’t always going to be the ideal situation, because we’re looking for a blessing.” He goes on to say, “My temptation, which was in my flesh, you despised not, nor rejected, but received me as an angel.” They didn’t let the infirmity be a difference. The people who received the blessing didn’t say, “Well, it *would* be great if you was looking better and feeling better, and you didn’t have such a headache and you talked a little bit better. Maybe next time when you come...” No, they said, “Wow! It’s so great to have you! This is what God has ordained, and this is Who we give the glory to.” Therefore, they were able to get some meat out of that whole purpose for God.

So, he goes on to say, in verse 15, “Where is that blessedness...” In other words, “You used to talk about how great this was, and you used to rejoice in what God gave, and it was special. There was enthusiasm; you were glad about it. Where did it go? At first, you would have done anything—anything!—just to enter into the blessing, but now, we can’t even find it!” This is something that Christians all over the world and down through the ages are familiar with. We are familiar with having a great time sometimes, and enjoying the blessings, and society comes up quickly and says, “Yeah, well, that was yesterday. What about today? It ain’t all that great today, is it? Yeah, it’s something else.” Society will go on and say, “Yeah, I know that was yesterday, but what have you done for me lately?” That’s society; that’s the world. Apostle Paul is, what we call putting them in remembrance. He’s asking them, “Am I therefore become your enemy, because I tell you the truth? At the first, when I was telling you how to get right, how to live right, how to do right, and how to receive more, you rejoiced, but now you’ve fallen into the same state that the whole rest of the world is in, that you don’t like being told what to do.” “Don’t tell me what to do!” I hear kids telling me that. “You can’t tell me what to do! You’re not my dad!” Yeah, that’s true; I am a lot bigger than you, though. I want you to consider that for a little bit. This has gone out into the world, “You can’t tell me what to do! You’re not the boss of me!” You know what? if you reject instruction... (Proverbs 1) I’m very thankful for the Book of Galatians. Whenever I find myself complaining, thinking I’m a little higher up, thinking I’ve got all the answers, you know, thinking that I know a better way, or I want to excuse myself from the Gospel, this book comes along and—Whack! It gets me right back on track. Amen for that. Amen. I’d rather be corrected, and be back in God’s grace, than be out of my mind and thinking that I’m okay.

I’m very thankful for the Book of Galatians, because, as we talked about, when we did a little bit of review on it, we saw that Galatia is up in that part of Turkey. We saw that the voyage of Paul went through what would have been Turkey, and parts of Greece and over into Italy

where Rome is, and we saw how he went up the coasts and he went through Jerusalem, and he went up through Syria. Now he's done all these travels, and he finds all these different things going on. You would think that while that was two-thousand years ago, what does that have to do with us today? I was in the United States Navy, and I went to my ship August 16th, 1981. One of the places we went was Jamaica. Anybody ever been to Jamaica? Isn't it beautiful there? Beautiful land. We went to this place—if you want to do some travelling, join the Navy. Of course, you might have to fight a war on the way, but, who's counting? Anyway, me and some friends were going out, and we were going to see Ocho Rios. We were looking forward to having a good time, me and my friends, and there was this guy that saw us and walked up to us, and he says, "Excuse me, gentlemen, are you guys Christians?" "Why, yes, we are." "I just have one question for you." We were feeling pretty good that somebody could identify our Christianity. "Oh, okay. Shoot, we'll give it a shot." He said, "How should a man be baptized?" At this time, we were on a train, and we didn't know where this train was going. He said, "You see here," he had one of those little green New Testaments. You ever see those? He had one of those, and it was worn out. You could see the writing, from him just going over and over and over it. It was all bent and wrinkled, it had been used so much. He said, "You see here in Matthew 28:19, it says that you need to be baptized in the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Ghost." We said, "Yeah." He said, "But over here, in Acts 2:38, it says to be baptized in Jesus' name. Which way? Which way is it?" "Yeah, well, you know, that's really a good question, we've kind of been wondering that ourselves." That was my answer, because that was before I came into the knowledge of the truth, saints. He didn't stop there. He followed us around, not to find out if we had the answer, but to find out if we had any part of the answer that might help him in his search. As he followed us around, all day, there was this woman who saw him, and he ran over to him, and you know what she said? "Do they know? Do they know?" He said, "No, they don't know. I'm trying to find anything out, but I haven't found anything out yet." She was exasperated. She looked at us, and she was a little bit angry, but she was more exasperated. She said, "You know, we've got a whole church full of people over there. We meet a couple of times a week, and we all want to know, how should a man be baptized?" "Well, we hope you get the answer." This was in 1982; I think it was August of 1982. January of 1983, I found the answer. That story goes back to 1980, when this young man (gesturing to himself) was on his knees praying to a god, and God spoke, and said, "You are praying to a god that cannot save." When God said this to me, where do you turn? Where do you find this precious truth?

I'm saying this to show that the Book of Galatians is going on right now. We might not be in Turkey where Galatia was, but we're in the spirit of Galatia, where the truth needs to be told. There are people all around... When God told me that I was praying to a god that couldn't save, if there had been anybody here, I don't know if I would have been ready to receive—I was so hard-hearted. I said, "God, lead me, show me, teach me," and I went to many churches. What kind of testimony? There were churches that were all one race, or all another race. There were churches that hooped and hollered the whole time you were in there, and you never heard a word. There were churches that put you to sleep before the first song was finished. There's all kinds of churches, looking for the answer. Yes, the Book of Galatians is going on right now. After coming to the knowledge of the truth in 1983, and, just enough to receive baptism in Jesus' name, myself, and follow after the Lord, and start being thankful. Then I understood. This Gospel really is precious. We take it for granted, because you can buy a Bible at a bookstore,

but, unless we seek and search, we can be ever learning, and never able to come unto the knowledge of the truth (2 Timothy 3:7).

Galatians 4:22-26 *For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman. But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise. Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar. For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all.*

You have to love the way Apostle Paul put this. Abraham had two sons: One after the flesh, and the other after faith. This, this here brings the decision right to us. It's a decision that we make, not just the day that we received the Lord and started walking; not just the day that we got baptized; not just the day that we committed ourselves. It brings the decision to us on Sunday. Before you go to church, it brings the decision to you, and after. It brings the decision to you when you go to bed. It brings the decision to you when you wake up on Monday. A few years ago, Linda, your husband did something. Actually, it was over twenty years ago. I had the opportunity to have breakfast with some brothers, and we were sitting and eating and talking, and Mike sat down, and, whatever the conversation was, I don't remember, but all I remember is Brother Mike said, "Well, brothers, I got up this morning, and I rededicated myself to the Lord." There was no whistles or banners playing. There was no band playing. There wasn't no hand-clapping and rejoicing, but I could see a firmness, and a decision made in Mike's life. That has stuck with me since then. The truth of that matter is we know when we rededicate ourselves, when we make up our mind, when we have to choose what son we're going to be or what daughter we're going to be... Are we going to be after the flesh today or are we going to be after the spirit? Are we going to be after our father Abraham, or are we going to be after the Law? Under the law, you could do a couple of things, and your heart could get away with stuff. "I'll walk an old lady across the street, ass long as I can do it in thirty seconds. If it's going to be thirty-five seconds, nah, I'll get a different blessing." I can call a brother up and say, "I'm calling because this will complete my two requests for the week. Okay, How you doing? Great? Great. Okay, bye." Now I can go out and do my own thing. That's the Law. That's after the flesh. But, after the faith: "Lord, who would you have me to talk with? How can I reach..." It says, "...Be slow to speak, and quick to hear..." (James 1:19) Lord, let me be quick to hear, and quick to pray, and slow to speak—slow to tune myself in, and quick to tune somebody else in.

So, it is written that he had two sons: One by the bondmaid, and the other by the free woman. Which is an allegory, for these are the two covenants (verse 24) the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar, and the other one (verse 26) is from Jerusalem, which is above. Not Jerusalem in the flesh, but New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:2).

Galatians 4:29-32 *But as then he that was born after the flesh persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, even so it is now. Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman. So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman, but of the free.*

It's not just talking about Ishmael (Genesis 16:15) and Isaac (Genesis 21:3) way back when, and it's not just talking about Jacob and Esau, no. That happened, what? four thousand, five thousand years ago? Several thousand years ago, anyway. How would that be a point? because he says, "...so it is now." The truth of the matter is, if you are serving the Spirit, you are going to suffer persecution from those who serve the flesh. That's why you—we—are going to have an internal battle sometimes. Our flesh is going to say, "Kick that spirit to the curb, and let's go and do *anything* else. It doesn't even have to be sin; I can just be slothful. It doesn't have to be great, I can use neglect; I can use lack of love." The spirit is saying, "God's calling us. God has so much more for you." The Scripture says, in verse 30, "Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bondwoman and her son: for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman." Anybody here ever suffer persecution? If you've suffered persecution, you must be living after the spirit. Persecution doesn't have to be external; sometimes it's internal. You can even get to the place where you think, "I've sacrificed too much; I'm never going to do that again!" that's an internal persecution. Now I am talking about persecution; I am not talking about stupidity; I am not talking about pride-ecution; I am not talking about I-refuse-to-be-wrong-ocution; I am not talking about make-me-leader-above-everybody-else-ocution. I am not talking about that; I am talking about persecution, because of how you live before God.

Persecution will actually come in varying degrees. When we're living according to the spirit, we have to realize: the spirit and the flesh, do you know why they fight? They aren't even going to inherit the same things (1 Corinthians 15:50). The spirit is going to inherit the things of new Jerusalem. Our last Scripture is going to be in Revelation chapter 21, talking about Jerusalem which is from above.

Revelation 21:1-7 *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely. He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.*