

The Sign You Are Adopted by God

International Bible Lesson

Galatians 3:15-18; 4:1-7

Sunday, February 19, 2012

“And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Galatians 4:6—KJV).

“To show that you are his children, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who cries out, ‘Father, my Father’” (Galatians 4:6—GNB).

“And because you are children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, ‘Abba! Father!’” (Galatians 4:6—NRSV).

In his letter to the Galatians, Paul described Christians before and after they believed in Jesus Christ. Prior to God adopting them into His family, they had been no better than slaves or minor children. They had been “enslaved to the elemental spirits of the world” (Galatians 4:3). They needed the law of God to teach them right from wrong and to motivate them to do right with appropriate rewards and punishments. If they disobeyed the moral law and followed the world’s ways, they developed sinful habits and became enslaved to the evil deeds that the world promotes. From trying to obey God’s law of love, they also learned how those committed to living apart from God would tempt them to do wrong or ridicule them for doing right.

“But when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,” to save believers from their sins and the eternal consequences of disobedience (Galatians 4:4). Through faith in Jesus Christ, they received “adoption as children” (Galatians 4:5). God also sent the Spirit to live in their hearts, and the Spirit of God’s Son enabled them to call God their Father, even as Jesus did (Mark 14:36). Already knowing right from wrong and wanting to do right, they turned to Jesus Christ and God the Father and they committed themselves to following their leadership daily. Now, as Christians, they were prepared to receive the inheritance that God planned to give His children. Today, the Father still offers all of these benefits plus an eternal inheritance to all who come to faith in His Son. — © Copyright 2012 L.G. Parkhurst, Jr.

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Thinking Further

1. How does God adopt a child into His family? How can we be adopted into the family of God?

2. What are some of the gifts a child of God will inherit from their heavenly Father?

3. Give some reasons why the inheritance of God’s children cannot come to them from the law?

4. Why is being under the law similar to being a minor child under a guardian or trustee?

5. In these verses, what major blessing or gift does Paul say the Spirit of God will bring to believers when He comes into their hearts? Why is this gift of the Holy Spirit so meaningful and valuable?

Read the verse by verse commentary on this lesson at the BibleLessonForum.com. See the recommended study and worship resources at SmallChurchResources.com.