

## Central Study Hour – Sabbath School Lesson Notes

### *“The Gospel in Galatians”*: Lesson 8, “From Slaves to Heirs”

#### SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read the memory text connecting it to the lesson title. Share highlights as desired from the opening narrative (Emphasize Martin Luther going from a slave to an heir of God).

#### SUNDAY: “OUR CONDITION IN CHRIST”

Read the title. Ask: *What was our condition before Christ?* Open Bibles to Gal. 3:22-24. Vs. 22, “**under sin**” as slaves, Vs. 23, “**kept under the law, shut up**” as prisoners. Vs. 24, “**the law was our schoolmaster**” to bring discipline (vs 25 puts it as being “**under a schoolmaster**”). All these expressions reveal our condition before Christ as being under bondage or slavery to sin.

*What was the purpose of the law in Gal. 3:24?* To bring us to Christ. **Read Gal. 3:25.** *When a person comes to faith in Christ, what changes?* One is no longer under the law as a schoolmaster. *Is the law abolished, or is its role as a strict disciplinarian or guard no longer needed?* (the 2<sup>nd</sup> choice). *Why is a schoolmaster not needed?* **Read Gal. 3:26.** The point is that when we come to Faith in Jesus, we become the children of God. “Paul is saying that those who come to faith in Christ are no longer minors; their relationship with the law is changed because they are now adult sons of God.” (If needed, refer to Rom. 3:31 to show that Paul still upheld the law. The adult children of God have a new mature relation to the law that establishes it.)

*What is it about baptism that makes it such a significant event?* **Read Gal. 3:27.** We put on Christ (like putting on a garment). Romans 6:1-11 describes baptism as uniting with Christ in His death and resurrection (see vss. 3-5 if needed). The Teacher’s Comments on p. 108 has helpful ideas in the first two *full* paragraphs and the “Consider This” questions. *Is it hard to remain dead?* **Read Rom. 6:7.** *Do we need to die a deeper death? Or have we not been truly crucified with Christ? If we haven’t died, how can we be born again to new life in Christ (as in His resurrection)? Are many people simply buried alive when they are baptized? **What is the point of Gal.3:28?*** Since the context is about salvation/baptism, we can see that Paul is saying that all are saved the same way because all are equally undeserving sinners. (Trying to make this verse about leadership or ordination would be taking it out of context). **Read Gal. 3:29.** We are heirs of God according to the promise given to Abraham (see also the last sentence of the narrative).

#### MONDAY: ENSLAVED TO ELEMEMENTARY PRINCIPLES

Read the first two paragraphs **or share the highlights** thoroughly. **Read Gal. 4:1-3.** *What does the heir/child not yet of age represent in this passage?* The unconverted person before he/she comes to faith in Christ. *What does vs. 3 mean about being “in bondage under the elements of the world”?* Paul means the controlling influence of sin in the world. **Read Eph. 2:2-3, 12** for a full description of Paul’s understanding of the “**elements of the world.**” Share highlights as desired from the bottom paragraph of the narrative.

## TUESDAY: "GOD SENT FORTH HIS SON"

**Read Gal. 4:4** from the quarterly **and** the first two sentences of the narrative. Share highlights from the rest of the top paragraph. *What was the significance of Jesus being "born of woman"?* Jesus was a real human. *What about being "born under the law"?* Jesus was born under the condemnation of the law; under the condemnation of sin! Wait! This is Christ! He never sinned. *How is that possible that he was born under the condemnation of the law?* It means Christ came to take the sins of all mankind upon Himself. From His very birth, Jesus took the condemnation of our sins "**under the law**" upon Himself!

*Why did Christ have to take our humanity in order to redeem us?* 1.) **Read Gal. 4:4-5**. To reach us born under the law that we can be adopted – to make us joint-heirs with Christ (Rom. 8:17). 2.) **Read 2 Cor. 5:21**. To take our sin in our place so we could have His righteous life. 3.) **Read Hebrews 2:14-18**. To destroy the devil, to be a faithful High Priest, to suffer temptation so that He can help us through temptation. Share highlights from the remaining narrative especially the last paragraph.

## WEDNESDAY: THE PRIVILEGES OF ADOPTION

Read the opening paragraph. Ask the question starting the 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph and highlight the 4 answers. *What positive purpose has Christ achieved for us through the redemption we have in Him?* **Read Gal. 4:5-7**. Paul describes salvation as an adoption. We become heirs of God. He really is our Daddy, our Abba, Father. The adopted son becomes the true son. An adopted son of a Roman Emperor actually became the next Emperor. Adoption establishes the right to inherit. *Are you glad you're adopted by the LORD of the universe? Do you ever doubt your adoption?* Read and discuss the box at the bottom of the page. **Read Rom. 8:17**. "Because we are joint-heirs with Christ, whatever belongs to Him belongs to us—even His power. Part of the freedom offered by Christ is the growing capacity to resist and put away sin in all its forms. God adopted us from the "bondage to sin." Read the bottom paragraph from the Teacher's Comments, p. 108 to the top of 109. Read and ask "Consider this." Unbelief forms a barrier. Choosing to keep certain cherished sins may be our biggest problem. Read the "Just for Teachers" comment near the bottom of p. 109.

## THURSDAY: WHY TURN BACK TO SLAVERY?

**Read Gal. 4:8-9**. In vs 8 Paul reminds them of their mindset in paganism of trying to appease false gods. In vs. 9 he is basically saying that they are reverting to that same mindset even though they now have learned of the only true God. They are falling back into bondage—the outward form of religion without the Spirit—legalistic ways and attitudes. *How could a wrong attitude lead us into the kind of bondage that Paul warned the Galatians about so vehemently?* **Highlight or read Gal. 4:13-16**. Paul is trying to get them to see where they used to be in their love and devotion so they will see that they have fallen away.

Conclusion: *Did you once have a more vital Christian experience? How did you lose it? What happened? What do you need to change to get it back?*