**Live free – Galatians wk 6 – All in the Family**

**Who are we? (Pic of yearbook or high school) Father family issues – I was a confused kid. Struggled to fit in at times even in my family.**

**I often struggled with who I was – growing up. I am convinced that until we find who we are in Christ we will always feel lost**

**This letter is about freedom! Freedom from self, sin, shame, & religion**

**Galatians 5:1 - It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.**

**Galatians is about what Jesus has done – not what we do.**

**It is about how good Jesus is – not about how good we are.**

**The Recap - Paul is writing - to churches he planted in danger of false teachers seeking to undermine him with a false gospel. The Galatians – were former hired mercenaries / Pagans / gentiles**

**This emergency letter is a personal, passionate response for the gospel and his apostolic authority**

**Galatians so far – Ch 1: The Gospel defined & Gospel illustrated (Paul’s story) / Ch 2: Gospel defended / Ch 3: Gospel explained and Gospels beginning (Abe’s Story) / Today end of Ch 3 & Ch 4: The Gospels benefits (Next week - the Gospel lived out)**

* **Galatians 3 - an explanation of Abraham’s relationship w/ God**

**Who is Abraham? Father of our faith (430 yrs before Moses) God chose him to introduce God’s message and bring Jesus. (54% of the world see Abe as the founder of their religion)**

**To play the Abraham card was powerful – trumped**

**(Jesus did it too – Before Abraham, I AM - John 8:48-5)**

**Paul explains**

* **Abe was declared righteous by God through faith in God’s word**
* **We are declared right with God through faith in the Word – Jesus.**
* **The purpose of the OT commands was to expose our sin, not fix it**
* **The OT identifies our need and sickness – Jesus is the remedy**

**The OT Law is a Jailer – Jesus is the redeemer**

**Galatians 3:23 Before the coming of this faith, (Jesus) we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. (Before Jesus the OT law was like chains - shackles on our life) 24 So the law was our guardian (jailer, warden) until Christ came that we might be justified (declared free) by faith. 25 Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian. (The security guard is gone your free – the chains are gone)**

**Then he goes into one of the greatest portions of scripture- who we are in Christ 26 So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, 27 for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (Baptism identifies us as His family – like wearing a letter jacket – or a wedding ring - an outward sign of an inward work) 28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. (we are ONE in Jesus) 29 If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s seed, (descendent - family) and heirs according to the promise.**

**No matter who you are we have equal status in Christ - ONE! Status, race, gender is often used to create conflict and division – but, Jesus puts us all on equal footing.**

**When one is adopted into the kingdom you don’t lose your ethnicity, culture, or gender. God thru Jesus says you’re now my child. No 2nd class, we’re family. We have equal status and position in Christ.**

**Paul introduces a lot of theological concepts in this letter:**

**\* Justification / sanctification / propitiation / redemption and adoption \* Salvation is like an all-inclusive Cruise – explain**

**\*\* One of the greatest benefits of the Gospel is – Adoption**

**The promise that God claims us as his child – a change in our position w/ God (This means God chose you – to be in his family)**

**1 John 3:1 - See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called (become) children of God! And that is what we are!**

**Guess what – We are not all God’s kids – we are all God’s creation that he loves deeply – but the whole world is not his children.**

**\*\* We are all orphans in our sin (homeless, wandering, alone)**

**John 8 Jesus explains that apart from him Satan is our spiritual father**

**\*\* Only thru faith in Christ do we become God’s children**

**Apart from Jesus we are not part of God’s family**

**1 John 3:2 - Dear friends, now we are (we have become) children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.**

**Paul then uses a comparison that we have a hard time getting in our culture: Galatians 4:1 What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, (minor) he is no different from a servant, although he owns the whole estate. 2 The heir (young minor) is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. 3 So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces of the world. (Like a minor who has an inheritance coming and can’t do anything but follow orders like a house servant)**

**OT – we minors under Moses / NT – we are of age in Christ**

**Men - When did you become a man? How did you know?**

* **Jewish culture says age 13 (problem, age doesn’t make a man)**
* **At 16 you can drive – but that does not make you an adult**
* **At 18 you can serve in the military – does not make you adult**
* **At 21 you can legally drink - does not make you an adult**
* **At 35yr old boy (a jobless Halo expert) - 55 yr old boy**

**Paul was writing to a Roman/Galatia culture – to them a man did not become a man until his father declared him one – “you’re a man today” – and on that day his boy clothes were be changed to a man’s robe.**

**Paul is using this to tell them… Thru Jesus, you have graduated!**

**Your old self is put off and Christ is put on - clothe yourself in Christ - be a grown up – time to be an adult – to think like one – act like one**

**Your Father through Christ declares you a child of age!**

**Paul is saying, you’re not that weird kid anymore. Dad says so!**

**Law - Kids need to be told what to do – rules, guidelines (external)**

**What to do; keep head out of toilet, don’t eat out of the yard, don’t put things in nose, go to the bathroom, taken everywhere, hand held, clothes set out – the OT is a baby sitter – the guardian.**

**Grace - Adults should know what to do (internal)**

**We now have freedom – but it comes from what is in us – love, forgive, serve, generous - not because we have to be told, but what is inside.**

**HOW do we do that? Paul deals with this in Chapter 5**

**Galatians 4:4 But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, (planned long ago. Rev 13:8 - before the foundations of the earth…Jesus did not show up 2000 yrs ago he has always been – fully God) born of a woman, (Jesus was fully man) born under the law, (Jesus grew up in it – lived it perfectly) 5 to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.**

**Son used for both men and women because God sees Jesus!**

**This was the God’s plan all along – the reason he came – adoption!**

**John 1:11 He (Jesus) came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. 12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God - 13 children born not of natural descent, (parents are) nor of human decision (religious choice) or a husband’s will, (spouse it) but born of God. (God picks you and saves you)**

**Adoption was the reason for the incarnation**

**This is what Paul is talking about - Galatians 4:6 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” (One of the most intimate words a person can hear - When I first heard my kids say – daddy… I melted and still do – God is not way up in the sky – but he is close) 7 So you are no longer a slave, but God’s child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. (Heir of Abe’s promise - No longer a slave to sin - but a son to the savior)**

**A Few Thoughts From the Family**

1. **God desires diversity – BTW – Jesus was not white!**

**God hates racism. I want Livingway to look like heaven – multiracial**

**Sadly, the most segregated hour in the US – Sunday morning**

**We have equal status in Christ - That’s the message of Galatians 3:28**

**Our nation needs this right now – we need Jesus – we need to be one!**

**After we become a Christian, we don’t wake up white or black, or an English accent. God loves the culture of diff people. We are not blind to them, we celebrate them! We are one in Christ! Jesus gives us actual community – walls come down in Christ.**

**This transcends any divisions and opinions. We are one – family!**

**Rev 5,7 – Declares the variety of tribes, tongues and nationalities in heaven**

1. **God is not an employer, but a father**

**A boss expects a time clock, a certain number of hours worked, a schedule of duties, a job description – work based**

**Moses and the Law had over 600 OT laws plus another 300 from tradition added – a job description – and if you do your job well you’ll get favor from the boss.**

**Some sadly see God the same way still, that God is somehow evaluating your performance and you don’t want to get fired.**

**God is not an employer, but a Father – he is not seeking a performance and job review but intimacy with you - a relationship with his kids.**

**God says, Call me dad. “Dad?” Yeah, I’m your dad. “But I was expecting a job description.” “I’ve adopted you, call me dad.” God is simply saying, come here you kid… and gives us a hug!**

**Do you struggle with an employer view of God? A lot of people do – It is not a karma thing (If I don’t do this, I get this) – it’s a grace thing.**

**Would I be a good dad if I placed 600+ requirements on the fridge and told my kids that if they obey the rules they get to eat dinner?**

**God does not want our performance review – He wants to teach you / love on you / help you / eat ice cream and hang out with you.**

1. **God is a perfect father – despite your father**

**We often get our picture of God from our earthly parents – What kind of dad did you have? Growing up without a father…**

**God is not an absent father – he is very involved with is kids – he’s a good intentional dad – and being His child is amazing!**

**Psalm 68:5- A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows, is God in his holy dwelling. / Psalm 27:10 - Though my father and mother forsake me, the LORD will receive me. / He is a good dad - James 1:17 - Every good and perfect gift comes from the Father above. And it’s based on the Dad He is, not the job we do**

1. **Adoption has its privileges**

**Being a child of the one in charge has its privileges…**

**Noel & Sum get privileges - pastor – despite themselves**

**Watch kids this week – they are weird – kool-aid stained mouths / run around without clothes / sleep on cookies / pick their nose and eat it / But you rarely see a stressed out kid -– they actually think Mom and dad will figure things out… We are the children of God – with a peace beyond understanding that comes from this relationship**

**What some of the Benefits of Adoption (other than salvation)**

* **We can talk to God our Dad and know he hears us**
* **We have peace knowing God our Dad is working things out**
* **We have favor from the all-powerful Father – GOD!**
1. **You don’t have to be an orphan**

**God wants to change your place and position with Him**

**Here’s the deal about adoption: You don’t deserve it, can’t earn it, can’t get yourself adopted - Jesus picks and pays for it.**

**It’s because of who dad is not because of who we are.**

**It is not about who you are, how much you have, what you have done or can do – it’s about Jesus in you. God’s grace (unmerited favor)**

**And that love causes us to respond with a deep love for Him and to follow him.**

**We read our bible/ give/ serve/ live holy lives/ tell others/ out of Love.**

**Just like our kids who want to be like there parents - I want to imitate my Father who I love not to get his love, but because I love and want to be like him. Ep 5:1 Follow God’s example, therefore, as dearly loved children.**

**Well Ted: I’m not a very good person - you need a dad / I struggle with lust - you need a dad / My marriage is in shambles - you need a dad. I sin a lot - you need a dad / The father loves you – sit w/ him**

**Gal 4:6 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, “Abba, Father.” 7 So you are no longer a slave, (no longer working off a job description) but God’s child; (Family) and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir. (inherited forgiveness & grace)**

**That’s the point of Christ, God wants to be your Dad - to know His love and enjoy and walk with Him - you’re not an employee you’re his kid - That’s good news!**

**Which are you? A salve to sin, self, and shame – or a son**

**So who am I? (Show Pic of me) I’m not that pimply faced punk; I am a child of God. And my heavenly Dad – He loves me.**