

## Grace Christian Huynh

***(4:1) Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;***

Contrasting heirs with slaves: heirs have more liberties, rights, and ownership while a slave owns almost nothing, not even himself, and has not many liberties. When an heir is a child, what he is supposed to own is not his. Like a slave, he owns nothing and must be told what to do and how to do things because he lacks understanding to control his future assets.

***(4:2) But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.***

Like any child, the young heir must be monitored by adults because a child cannot be trusted with tasks beyond the child's understanding. The father must appoint a time that is appropriate for the child to take on tasks for his future inheritance. The phrase, "... until a time appointed of the father," reminds me of God appointing the time of the end of the world for some reason. The timing is up to His discretion.

***(4:3) Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:***

The first two verses were a human example. Paul now connects his human example to his point to make the example relevant. Slaves don't own anything just like how children don't really own anything. I think when he references everyone as being children at one point, he means that we were once an immature soul who only saw worldly elements. World elements are literally what is observed in front of someone. When someone has an immature spirit, they cannot see past what is in front of them (such as the presence of God in our lives) and is only concerned with the self and instant gratification.

***(4:4) But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,***

Verses 3 and 4 go back to Paul's human example. We are the heirs of a kingdom, the Kingdom of God, but we are too immature to realize that we must prepare for our afterlife, for our future. In our immature state of being, we do things that we want to do right at the moment (instant gratification). The guardians are the laws, they tell us what is right what is not right to do. Then, the appointed time of the father (God sending His Son to die on the cross) is when the father feels it is time for the child to take more responsibility to prepare for the estate (kingdom). The birth of Jesus started a new kind of era. Jesus was born under the law, so He must obey the law while He was with us, which he did perfectly.

***(4:5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.***

The law condemned us, but because Jesus Christ did not break the law at all, he was able to save us from the condemnation of the law so that we could inherit the kingdom. He was able to save us by dying on the cross so that we would not have to die for our sins.

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

Being a law follower does not give you the Kingdom. Being the children of God allows us the right to the inheritance. Receiving the Spirit is what makes us the children of God.

***(4:7) Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.***

Paul emphasizes how amazing it is to be from a slave who owned nothing to a son with a great inheritance. In this way, God displays His great love. It is sad that we have the possibility of such a great inheritance, but many refuse it or do not believe it exists.

***(4:8) Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.***

Paul explains why we were slaves. We were slaves to gods who by nature are not God. By nature, God must have had something to do with the creation of the universe or must have control over natural elements. However, the gods humans have been known to worship were man-made and did nothing. Their gods did not

have any power at all, much less create anything. Instead, their gods were created from human imagination. God does exist with great power and displays His power every second. His power can be seen in nature. The complexity of natural systems that work in harmony can be observed, but usually not fully understood. Sometimes, we think that in order to know God exists, we have to witness some supernatural miracle, but in reality, all you need to do is look at a plant or a newborn baby to know that an intelligent Creator exists.

***(4:9) 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?***

It can be unbelievable to go back to the false gods after knowing a completely true and real God. When reading the events of Moses and the Israelites that escaped Egypt, the reader can sometimes be frustrated by how blind the Israelites must have been. They witnessed miracle after miracle, along with interactions with God that will not be witnessed again, but they still managed to attribute these great acts to their man-made gods. This situation is similar to what the Galatians have found themselves in. To know about the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and then to go back on their faith is quite amazing. After knowing and witnessing something good (the love of God), how could they go back to something bad?

***(4:10) Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.***

***(4:11) I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.***

The Galatians thought that following the laws and observing the holy days would save them from eternal death. This backward step in their faith disappointed Paul because he spent his time and energy to teach them the gospel during his first stay at Galatia. As Paul had established before, people are not saved by obeying the law because the law only condemns us. People are saved by believing and accepting the death of Jesus Christ; that is the only way to be saved.

***(4:1) Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all;***

While it is true that an heir may have wealth and freedom and a slave has neither wealth nor freedom, a child heir, like a slave, is reliant on the authority of the house. The child also is unable to properly run or own anything until the original owner passes the inheritance onto him. In this way, the child has no power in his household. He is like the slave, even if he is the heir.

***(4:2) But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father.***

The heir is to be watched and guarded until he matures enough to handle his responsibilities. The heir cannot receive his inheritance until the father decides on this. God also decides when and what His children will experience in their lives.

***(4:3) Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world:***

Before the sacrifice of Jesus Christ, we were under the slavery of sin. We also had no inheritance from God. Being "under the elements of the world" refers to how Christians can either be part of this world or we can be separate from this world and to belong to God. While we are enslaved by the world, we focus only on worldly elements and not on our faith in God.

***(4:4) But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law,***

God had appointed the time of Christ's death and resurrection as the time children of God would be able to receive the inheritance of salvation. While we are now able to receive this inheritance of salvation, we must accept the responsibility of living as the children of God and put faith in Christ's sacrifice.

***(4:5) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.***

Through Christ's sacrifice, we are redeemed from our sin and may be able to receive the inheritance of salvation. Christ frees us from the death sentence of the law. By accepting Christ's sacrifice, we are able to become children of God.

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

When we accept God into our lives, we will receive Christ and the Holy Spirit into our hearts in which we may be children of God and be able to pray to God as our Father.

***(4:7) Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.***

Christ allows us to become children of God, able to inherit salvation through Christ's blood. Becoming children of God frees us from our slavery under sin.

***(4:8) Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.***

Before we were saved, we were slaves under the world and its false gods, idols, and other worldly things. When we come to the true God, we are shown that these gods are false.

***(4:9) 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?***

However, there are some people who are revealed the Good News of Christ's salvation, yet they still go back to their old habits only to be enslaved by their vice and false gods again. Some who claim to be Christians might then stray away from the faith to be enslaved by their prior vice once more.

***(4:10) Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.***

***(4:11) I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed upon you labour in vain.***

By following the teachings of the false leaders, the Galatians were fooled into

believing that they could be saved by only keeping the traditions of the holidays and laws. Paul felt that his efforts to lead the Galatians to the faith in the salvation through Christ's sacrifice were in vain. The Galatians were wrong to fall into the ideas that they would be saved by simply keeping the law. But in fact they must also have faith in Christ's sacrifice.