

Galatians Chapter 4

4:1-7 From a slave to a son

Intro:

4:1-2 An heir yet a minor child; an illustration from family life familiar at the time.
Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything,

4:2 but (ἀλλὰ contrast is between having a vast inheritance) he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.

Summary 4:1-2

1. When the child was a minor in the eyes of the law--it is this word that Paul actually uses--his status was no different from that of a slave, even though he was the future owner of a vast estate.
2. Positionally he was like a slave, in that he could make no decisions; he had no freedom.
3. Functionally in his life he was under the daily guardianship and protective care of his managers.

4. On the other hand, at the time set by his father the child entered into his inheritance with its responsibility and freedom.
5. The application of the illustration is obvious as Paul applies it to the inferior condition of a person under law, both a "minor" and a "slave," and to the new freedom and responsibility that come to him in Christ.

4:3-7 The Spiritual application of the illustration explained

4:3 Their past condition

4:4-6 Their present status as adult sons

4:7 Conclusion

4:3 So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.

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Would take this here to refer to their pre-salvation system of belief whether Jew or Gentile.

Summary 4:3

1. Paul uses the term children here (napios) to refer to individuals before the Cross, the Faith coming on the scene.
2. They were under the curse of the Law and were enslaved to their elemental beliefs.
3. The statutes, the commandments of the Law were designed to teach them authority orientation, responsibility in its role as guardian and stewards/messengers.
4. By the application this also describes the individual's pre-salvation state enslaved to the OSN with its trends toward human good and its lust patterns.

4:4-6 Their present status as adult sons

4:4 First a timing marker

But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,

What God did!
God sent forth His Son

born of a woman born under the Law,