

GALATIANS

4:1-31

Galatians 4:1-31

Taught by Simeon Forder on Sunday morning, 13th October 2024 @ Deal Christian Fellowship

Reading: Ephesians 2:4-10

Introduction

Chapter overview of Galatians

- **Chapters 1-2:** Personal
- **Chapters 3-4:** Doctrinal
- **Chapters 5-6:** Practical

Last week we got as far as the half way point of the book of Galatians, which we're studying our way through, verse by verse. And this morning we're going to study all of chapter 4, which, combined with the prior chapter, covers the doctrinal portion of this book about the law and grace — that is, these chapters teach us about *what* we believe — with chapters 1 and 2 before them focussing on Paul's *personal* experience of grace, and chapters 5 and 6 (which we'll begin next week) focussing on the *practical* application of all we've learnt to our lives.

But before we get going in chapter 4 this morning, I'll quickly recap what we studied in chapter 3. First, Paul questioned the Galatians rather directly, in effect asking them what on earth they were thinking. For having been saved by grace, did they now really think they needed to earn their salvation by works? And he went on to say that the reality is if you're going to keep the law to make yourself righteous before God, you're going to *have* to keep *all* of it. The law is that unforgiving. It's that holy a standard.

But that prompted a question; given the perfect nature of the law, did that mean God's covenant with Abraham was somehow undone? Paul says no, because just as we don't go and change a human covenant *after* it is made, the law given to Moses didn't undo what God promised to Abraham some 400+ years *before* on the basis of faith. But since that's the case, what was or is the point to the law? Well, it wasn't there to *remove* our sin, but to *reveal* it. Just like a mirror doesn't make you clean, it just shows that you need a wash. Out of interest did anyone try that last week?!

Indeed, we *read* how the purpose of the law is to bring us to Christ, and not ourselves, for salvation. But having chased us to Christ, and us having been saved by *His completed* work on the cross, not by *our* good works, the law can chase us no more. And this eliminates boasting about how good we have been at keeping it. And it eliminates any pious attitude that God loves us because of how good we are. It takes away self-righteousness, and it leaves us as equals before God. Regardless of background, colour, gender, or ethnicity. That is God's grace at work.

But let us keep in mind that while grace takes away *self-righteousness*, it doesn't take away righteousness. Indeed, the final two chapters of Galatians will make it clear that as Christians we *should* be pursuing righteousness, not in an effort to be self-righteous, but that we might please the One who has saved us. That as the Holy Spirit lives in us, we would leave behind the works of the flesh, and instead see the fruit of the Spirit in our lives.

Overview of chapter four

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- **v1-7** — We are free, and adopted as sons
- **v8-20** — Don't act as if you are not free
- **v21-31** — Learn from the example of Ishmael and Isaac

Now, as we move into chapter four, Paul is going to continue building on a point he made in chapter three in verses 24-25, which say:

Galatians 3:24-25

Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

And in the first 7 verses he's going to draw a parallel with how the law treated us before we were Christians, and how our parents would have treated us as minors, before we had the capacity to act as adults. Then, from verses 8-20, he'll show the Galatians the danger of what they're trying to do, that they are actually desiring to be in bondage again. And in the final 11 verses, Paul will point the Galatians — and us — to the examples of Ishmael and Isaac, so that we might learn from them.

Chapter four

So then, keeping in mind that Paul has just written about the law being our tutor, our schoolmaster, to bring us to Christ, let us continue this letter in chapter 4, verses 1 and 2:

Galatians 4:1-2

Now I say that the heir, as long as he is a child, does not differ at all from a slave, though he is master of all, but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.

You see, a child of even the richest man or woman, doesn't have any advantage over that person's personal assistant, advisors, or nanny. In fact, the one who works for the parent actually has far more power and autonomy than the child, even extending to correcting the *child*. And the child isn't entrusted with major decisions, they aren't trusted with investing their parent's money in stocks and shares, they don't have access to their parent's passwords and credit cards. They don't even decide what to have for dinner. Indeed, they don't set the rules, the rules are set for them. They are to be obedient to their parents, just as any employee or contractor to their parents are also to carry out their instructions to the letter.

Yet one day that will all change, when the child becomes capable of making decisions of their own, and they move from being an heir in theory, to one in practice. Now, we have certain rules in our country as to what age a child can act on behalf of their parents, or access a trust fund that has been set up for them. But in Paul's day it was the father who decided when the age of maturity was reached. And when that happened, there was a ceremony to mark the occasion, called the *toga virilis*, from which time the child would be given the position of a full-grown son in the family. They were no longer a child. And it's to this example that Paul compares us, writing:

Galatians 4:3

Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world.

That is, we were under the elementary, the basic building blocks of the law. That just as the minor was encircled by rules of what they should do, and when they should do it, so we were without freedom in that sense. Penned in by what we were told to do.

Galatians 4:4-5

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

In other words, in God's timing, as had been prophesied since Genesis chapter 3, God sent Jesus, born of Mary, herself a sinner, that He might take our place on the cross to pay for all the wrong we had done, that the law may have no more demand on us. Not only so that we would not be seen as guilty, but that we might be seen as sons.

And this isn't in the sense of us taking the place of a newborn, but of a full grown son — for the Greek word behind adoption here is **huiothesia** *huios* meaning *son*, and *thesis* meaning position. You see, the type of adoption Paul is talking about isn't that of adopting a newborn baby, but of this moment in a Roman boy's life where he would take off his children's garments (his *toga praetexta*), and put on his *toga virilis* — his toga of manhood.

And doesn't this remind you of how Paul already in Galatians has said *"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ."* That is, as adopted sons, as we have put off our old clothes of sin and darkness, and put on Christ and His righteousness (as we also read in Romans chapter 13).

Because God looked on Jesus as if He were us on the cross, He is now able to look on us as if we were His Son, because we *are* now adopted as His sons. And let me note here, ladies, that you shouldn't feel any more weird about be called God's sons than any man feels weird being called the Bride of Christ. It's not about your gender, its about position as relates to God. And these examples in the Bible are powerful ones that we lose the depth and meaning of if we try and turn them into gender neutral examples.

And Paul is going to show just how big a deal this was for a boy to be formally adopted by his father as his son, for, as we'll read, he would now be recognised as his father's heir too. We read:

Galatians 4:6

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

And what a wonderful picture this is — that we are no longer strangers to God, but sons of God... crying out, as the untranslated Hebrew word is written here; *Abba* — which is what you'll hear even today in Israel as Jewish kids run up to their father, shouting *Abba, Abba!* Which we would recognise in English as a child runs up to their father saying *Daddy, Daddy!* It's such a dear term of affection, of recognition, and of relationship.

And if you've had children, you'll know how your heart melts as you hear your child run up to you saying that. And your child has your ear at that moment, right? That's the kind of relationship we now have with God because of what Jesus did on the cross for us. Not only that we might be forgiven, but that we might be adopted. Which means we're not approaching God as our judge, but as our Heavenly Father. With that love, that intimacy, and that trust. How incredible is that?!

You know, my 2.5 year old son has implicit trust in me. He doesn't doubt that I'll take care of him. He doesn't doubt that I'll catch him (though he probably should be a bit more concerned about that!). He doesn't doubt that I love him. And sure, he's not old enough yet to realise that I can be an idiot and I certainly do make mistakes. But you get the idea of that trust, that confidence he has. And I share that, because that's the kind of relationship, intimacy and trust we can have in our Heavenly Father — and then some, for God doesn't slumber or sleep, He doesn't change, He doesn't have bad days, He doesn't make mistakes, or lose His temper, and He isn't selfish.

And so, Paul continues, saying that God's Spirit in us, which produces this affection toward our Heavenly Father, is very evidence that we are no longer slaves penned in by the law, writing:

Galatians 4:7

Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

And this should leave us on the floor in awe of what God has done. One might imagine what it would be like to be an heir of a millionaire, billionaire, or even royalty — of all the riches and benefits that would afford. Yet we are heirs of the Creator of the universe! Again, that's why Paul specifically uses the term son, and not child here, for in Roman culture sons were the ones that would have received the inheritance from their fathers. As was the case with Hebrew culture as we see throughout the Old Testament. But what does this inheritance look like, you might wonder. Well, it's not an inheritance in this world, as your bank account no doubt testifies to! Rather, it's something far more special, far more extravagant than anything this world has to offer. We read in 1 Peter:

1 Peter 1:3-5

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Our inheritance is all the blessings of Heaven, which *nothing* in this world can compare to. And it is nothing that the government, or economies, or pandemics, or wars or can affect. Our inheritance cannot be diminished or destroyed. And how do we obtain it? Through faith alone in Christ alone. Which makes it all the more important that we understand that not everyone is a son or a child of God, though we should desire they would come to be so.

You see, there are many that teach that we're all God's children, in an effort to explain how we ought to take care of all men. And the motive is good — we *should* indeed love our neighbour as ourself. But while the motive is good, the theology is poor. For even Jesus Himself said, when talking to the Pharisees that "*You are of your father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do.*"

So let us not make the mistake of talking to our children, or others children, or even to our unbelieving friends as if everyone were a child of God. That's not the case — for while they are His creation, made in His image, they are not positionally His children. At least not yet, for again, we *want* them to be the children of God, but that requires repentance and faith in Christ.

Now, having emphasised how we are free, even adopted as sons, Paul now says to the Galatians that they would be *mad* to now act as if they weren't free, and try and put themselves back under the crushing weight of the law which they could never keep. The law that could never clean them, only convict them. That couldn't remove their sin, but only reveal it. That couldn't help them, only leave them helpless.

He writes in verse 8:

Galatians 4:8-11

But then, indeed, when you did not know God, you served those which by nature are not gods. But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain.

What Paul is saying here, is that before they were Christians, they served other gods — who weren't really gods at all, whether made from wood, or precious metals, or stone — that demanded much from them in worship. And we might think that's an altogether different experience to ours, yet doesn't our world worship titanium phones, oak furniture, carbon fibre bikes, and diamond jewellery? And these idols demand much in our attention, as well as regular instalments. The idols of this world haven't changed as much as we might think.

And Paul says, *look, having turned from worshipping those things, and serving those things, to the living God, why on earth are you turning back and once again placing yourself under requirements and rules and rituals?*

He writes here of them observing days and months and seasons and years. Days — such as having to keep the sabbath. Months — such as keeping the observance of the new moon, as was practiced in Israel during the time of the kings. Seasons — such as the feasts of Israel at certain times of the year. And years — Speaking of sabbatical years, and jubilees. And he's saying if you observe these things, you're putting yourself right back under the Mosaic law, forgetting what James wrote, that "...whoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is guilty of all."

This isn't the only letter in which Paul dealt with this matter. For all of Colossians chapter 2 deals with the same. And he wrote there:

Colossians 2:20-23

Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations— "Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle," which all concern things which perish with the using—according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.

If keeping such laws, rituals and regulations was not able to remove your sin before, it is not going to do it now. The law cannot help you *be* good, it can only show you that you're *not*.

And Paul says here to the Galatians, "I am afraid for you, lest I have laboured for you in vain." — in other words, *I'm worried about you*. But Paul isn't worried that he had wasted his time, but rather that they had not truly grasped the gospel. That's his focus, for we read next:

Galatians 4:12

Brethren, I urge you to become like me, for I became like you. You have not injured me at all.

That is, he had become like them in that he wasn't under the traditions of Judaism any more, but since they'd gone the opposite way, placing themselves under those traditions that were never meant for them, he says, return to where you were, knowing you are free from the weight of the law. Not because you've somehow offended me, for you haven't, but because I don't want to see you live with this weight upon your shoulders.

And he takes them back to the time he first preached the gospel to them, writing:

Galatians 4:13

You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first.

In other words, he preached at the first opportunity, despite, and even because of his physical state. What an example, that rather than a physical trial being the excuse that he couldn't preach the gospel, it made him prioritise the right things, in essence having the attitude of *"I'm ill, let me do the most important thing... everything else can wait!"*

And he notes how happily they received him, saying:

Galatians 4:14

And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

That is, they looked past the physical, and looked for the spiritual. Oh how we might do that. There are some preachers that have such a polished appearance, with smiles a dentist would be proud of, suits a tailor would approve of, and a stage presence that a broadcaster would aspire to. Yet they are not faithful to God and His Word. And we must not be drawn to them, but rather those who are *faithful* — even *if* at times they are less presentable, less dynamic, less easy on the eye.

And Paul now asks the Galatians to consider what wonderful news the gospel of grace was to them:

Galatians 4:15

What then was the blessing you enjoyed? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your own eyes and given them to me.

This gives us an insight to what Paul's physical condition may well have been, potentially being some sort of eye disease that wasn't easy for him, nor pleasurable for others to look at. Yet, so overjoyed were the Galatians at the message they received, that there were willing to have done anything for the messenger. That as Isaiah wrote; *"How beautiful upon the mountains Are the feet of him who brings good news, Who proclaims peace, Who brings glad tidings of good things, Who proclaims salvation, Who says to Zion, "Your God reigns!""*

But having received the message of the gospel with joy, and and the messenger with it, he now asks them if they have turned on him, writing:

Galatians 4:16

Have I therefore become your enemy because I tell you the truth?

In effect asking them if they are turning away from him because he's telling them the same truth as he has always done. And it's the truth he cares about, noting how false apostles, false teachers, do the opposite — seeking your approval of *them*, rather than your acceptance of the *truth*. Saying:

Galatians 4:17

They zealously court you, but for no good; yes, they want to exclude you, that you may be zealous for them.

That is, false teachers are not interested in you following Christ, but in you following them. And legalists in particular will try and convince you to follow them, doing this, and not doing that, that you might be in their club — a spiritual elite, one of the special few who really get it. And they'll mobilise you to convince others to do the same. Shaming all those who refuse to keep the sabbath, or wear a suit to church, because after all, that's not very spiritual of you, that's not a very good Christian of you, is it. But they are passionate about the wrong things, Paul says:

Galatians 4:18

But it is good to be zealous in a good thing always, and not only when I am present with you.

You see, zeal, or enthusiasm, isn't the issue. Oh how we should be zealous. But we should be zealous for the right things. And Paul sets himself forward as an example of that, continuing in verses 19 and 20:

Galatians 4:19-20

My little children, for whom I labour in birth again until Christ is formed in you, I would like to be present with you now and to change my tone; for I have doubts about you.

Paul is saying I will labour in agony that you might remember not who I am, but who Christ is, and receiving Him not as your judge, but your Saviour. Putting off the old man, and putting on Christ, that the Spirit of His Son would truly be in your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!". And he says he wants to see this happen, and be present with them, that he might *soften* his tone, not be *more* demanding of them as these false teachers continually are.

Now, as Paul concludes this chapter, and this middle portion of his letter, he brings them back to the nature of the law, contrasting it to faith in Christ. And he starts by saying:

Galatians 4:21

Tell me, you who desire to be under the law, do you not hear the law?

In other words; are you crazy? Don't you hear what the law says? What it demands of you? How it condemns you? That doesn't mean it's a bad thing, but realise what it is there for. And that's not to make you look good.

Indeed, by trying to put themselves under the law, the Galatians evidently weren't considering how holy the law was, how just its demands were. That is, the law wasn't merely a few ideas Moses scribbled down on the back of some papyrus. No, no. This was given to Moses by God Himself in terrifying circumstances. We read in Exodus chapter 19:

Exodus 19:16-21

Then it came to pass on the third day, in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud on the mountain; and the sound of the trumpet was very loud, so that all the people who were in the camp trembled. And Moses brought the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the foot of the mountain. Now Mount Sinai was completely in smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire. Its smoke ascended like the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mountain quaked greatly. And when the blast of the trumpet sounded long and became louder and louder, Moses spoke, and God answered him by voice. Then the LORD came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the mountain. And the LORD called Moses to the top of the mountain, and Moses went up. And the LORD said to Moses, "Go down and warn the people, lest they break through to gaze at the LORD, and many of them perish.

This was no ordinary event. This was not merely some human made law. This was the law of God. Perfect in every way. But demanding in every way. It was holy, and unrelenting. It didn't say "try not" — it said "do not". It was unambiguous. And it left an impression on the children of Israel, for we read in Exodus 20, immediately after the Ten Commandments were given:

Exodus 20:18-19

Now all the people witnessed the thunderings, the lightning flashes, the sound of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they trembled and stood afar off. Then they said to Moses, "You speak with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die."

And it seems that the Galatians had missed this. They had not understood the seriousness and weight of the law. So Paul now points them to the examples of Ishmael and Isaac, writing:

Galatians 4:22

For it is written that Abraham had two sons: the one by a bondwoman, the other by a freewoman.

And so he is talking about Ishmael, who Abraham fathered through Hagar (his wife's maid), taking matters into his own hands, and Isaac, who was the son *God* promised, through Sarah, his wife.

Galatians 4:23-26

But he who was of the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and he of the freewoman through promise, which things are symbolic. For these are the two covenants: the one from Mount Sinai which gives birth to bondage, which is Hagar—for this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children—but the Jerusalem above is free, which is the mother of us all.

So then, Ishmael was born according to the flesh — there was nothing supernatural about his birth. But Isaac was born according to the promise — that is, it was a supernatural event that took place in him being born, for Abraham was 100 years old, and Sarah 90, their bodies considered as good as dead in regard to child bearing. And Paul says these opposites are a picture of how opposite the law and grace are.

You see, Hagar is identified with Sinai, where the law was given. And her son was born as a result of Abraham's *own* efforts. And we see that ultimately this son was cast out, along with Hagar.

But Sarah gave birth to Isaac when there was no earthly hope of that taking place. Isaac was therefore a picture of Christ, for He was the son of promise. And it was to and through Isaac that the inheritance of Abraham flowed. And Paul continues, quoting from Isaiah 54:1:

Galatians 4:27

For it is written: "Rejoice, O barren, You who do not bear! Break forth and shout, You who are not in labour! For the desolate has many more children Than she who has a husband."

That is, the law never produced children of God. It never produce adopted sons. It never could. And we read on:

Galatians 4:28

Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise.

That means the inheritance comes our way. Not because of what we've done, but because of what He has done. Not because of our works, but because of His promise. His grace.

Galatians 4:29

But, as he who was born according to the flesh then persecuted him who was born according to the Spirit, even so it is now.

And so, Paul points back to what happened back in Genesis 21. We read there, picking up in verse 8 where Moses is talking of Isaac, and writes:

Genesis 21:8-10

So the child grew and was weaned. And Abraham made a great feast on the same day that Isaac was weaned. And Sarah saw the son of Hagar the Egyptian, whom she had borne to Abraham, scoffing. Therefore she said to Abraham, "Cast out this bondwoman and her son; for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, namely with Isaac."

So what happened, was that Ishmael, the son of Abraham's own works, looked at Isaac, the son of promise, and mocked him — saying *you're immature. You're only just getting off baby food. You're not as grown up as I am!* And that's exactly what the legalist does today, saying *you're spiritually immature, you haven't yet grown up to keep all these rules and regulations that make you a **real** Christian!* But they've missed the point. And Paul notes next:

Galatians 4:30

Nevertheless what does the Scripture say? "Cast out the bondwoman and her son, for the son of the bondwoman shall not be heir with the son of the freewoman."

In other words, do away with legalism. For God's promises are not earned through works, but received through faith.

Galatians 4:31

So then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free.

That is, we are not going to walk into Heaven because of all the good deeds we have done. We're not going to stand before God as holy because of our own righteousness. But we're only going to do those things because of what Christ has done for us. We read in Ephesians chapter 2:

Ephesians 2:4-10

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

And that is where Paul will go next in this letter, showing that since we have been saved by grace, and since we have been adopted as God's sons, we are no longer to live in sin, but rather we are to flee from it. Not because we're trying to earn God's favour, but in response to His amazing grace.

Conclusion

As I close this morning, let me underline what Paul says about the legalist here. That they will persecute you, ridicule you, and trouble you. They will tell you that you're not good enough as a Christian, that you must keep to this rule, that ritual, or that regulation. They will make you feel like you are a baby Christian, or even not a Christian at all if you don't do as they say. And you'll find them everywhere, and in many churches.

Back when my dad and brother used to regularly join Ron Matsen on Genesis TV for the hour long Q&A after Ron had taught, there were some people who week after week wanted to phone in and talk about keeping the sabbath — even when *nothing* to do with that topic had been taught in the hour before. And even through scripture, and the answers given on the Q&A, were perfectly clear on the matter.

Some people are so determined to be self-righteous, and they simply hate the idea that others are seen as righteous — not because of what they have done, but because of what Christ has done for them. And rather than entertain the idea that they may be wrong, they are determined to prove that others are wrong, and are not righteous as a result.

Now, as I read through some commentaries on this passage, there was one point that struck me by Jon Courson, and I want to read it to you in full. He said this:

Where did Abraham get Hagar? In Egypt. You recall the story: When there was famine in Canaan, Abraham and Sarah went to Egypt for food. While there, Abraham got entangled in lies and deception. Pharaoh sent him away with riches and servants—one of whom was Hagar.

Whenever someone is legalistic, judgmental, and uptight, I know he got those attitudes not from the Word, but from the world. You see, the more sin we're exposed to, the more sin we're involved in, the more cynical we become. Had Abraham never gone into Egypt, he never would have had Hagar.

If someone is pompous, pious, and full of pride; if someone is legalistic, fault-finding, and sin-sniffing, I know he or she is one who has spent quite a bit of time in Egypt. Conversely, if someone is loving and kind, forgiving and gentle, he or she is one who has spent time in the Promised Land, enjoying the grace and goodness of God.

Legalism doesn't protect us from carnality, folks. It is the result of carnality. To the pure, all things are pure (Titus 1:15). People who are legalistic are those who have been peeking at Playboy, going to R-rated movies, or otherwise engaged in Egypt in one way or another. Angry at themselves, they're out to persecute others.

Jon Courson

Is that the case for all those who are legalistic? I don't know. I'm not certain that's *always* the case, yet I've seen it be the case. I've seen those who've labelled others as baby Christians because they wear shorts to church, yet themselves are now in jail because of their sin that has found *them* out. See what nonsense legalism is!?

And before we *ourselves* get all self-righteous, let us remember that well made comment, that our sin *always* looks worse on *other* people. That is, we can lall too easily look at others with disgust or contempt at how they talk or act, when we do the *same* things *ourselves*.

So, let us pray for wisdom. Let us hold fast to God's Word. May we rely on Christ's righteousness alone. But let us also pursue righteousness, not out of obligation, but out of love to our loving Saviour — for we have not merely been forgiven, but we have been adopted as sons. And if sons, then heirs with Christ. Oh, the goodness of God toward us!

Application questions

This week, please do consider these three questions:

- Are you trusting God implicitly, as a child does to their father?
- Are you trying to be self-righteous, trying to *earn* God's favour?
- Are you imposing on others that which the Bible doesn't require of them?

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