

Living Water Fellowship

5th Sunday in Easter – 28th April 2024

COME TO JESUS

SONGS: *Even So Come*
Rest My Soul

WELCOME & PRAYER:

GROW IN HIS GRACE

BIBLE READING: Galatians 3:23 - 4:7

²³ Before the way of faith in Christ was available to us, we were placed under guard by the law. We were kept in protective custody, so to speak, until the way of faith was revealed.

²⁴ Let me put it another way. The law was our guardian until Christ came; it protected us until we could be made right with God through faith. ²⁵ Now that the way of faith has come, we no longer need the law as our guardian. ²⁶ For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. ²⁷ All who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. ²⁸ There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male & female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. ²⁹ Now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, & God's promise to Abraham belongs to you.

4 ¹ Think of it this way. If a father dies & leaves an inheritance for his young children, those children are not much better off than slaves until they grow up, even though they actually own everything their father had. ² They have to obey their guardians until they reach whatever age their father set. ³ That's the way it was with us before Christ came. We were like children; we were slaves to the basic spiritual principles of this world.

⁴ But when the right time came, God sent his Son, born of a woman, subject to the law. ⁵ God sent him to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law, so that he could adopt us as his very own children. ⁶ And because we are his children, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, prompting us to call out, "Abba, Father." ⁷ Now you are no longer a slave but God's own child. And since you are his child, God has made you his heir.

CHILDREN'S TIME:

SONG: *Glory to our Great Redeemer*

THE MESSAGE: *LIVING EXCLUSIVELY...AS GOD'S CHILDREN*

OFFERING SONG: *Living Hope*

PRAYERS:

OUR CHRISTIAN CONFESSION: *THE APOSTLES' CREED*

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven, & sits at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty, from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

THE COMMUNION:

Words of Institution & The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, & the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

Worship Video during Communion: ALL GLORY BE TO CHRIST (KING'S KALEIDOSCOPE)

GO IN HIS POWER

THE BLESSING:

(Name), † child of God,

In the Risen Jesus, you are the Father's child! -- Amen.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

SONG: *Grace*

SHOW HIS LOVE

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Group Bible Study/Discussion:

1. Read Galatians 3:23 - 4:7. What questions immediately come to mind? What do you find most challenging? Why?
2. As you've been reading Galatians... Why is it important for Paul to establish the primacy & superiority of grace? What happens if grace is dependent upon keeping the law? How is the supposed conflict between the law & the promise settled?
3. As a child, what were some family "non-negotiables" that established how your family functioned as "family"? How have those survived subsequent generations? Why do you think those things lasted or were abandoned? What's the result, in your opinion?
4. Paul begins here by describing the "Law" as a 'prison guard' & 'babysitter' for Israel between Moses receiving the Law & the coming of the Messiah. What is Paul's point in using these examples? What is he saying that life is like for people striving to keep the Law? What is he saying about the Law itself? How does this compare to a life lived by faith in Jesus' finished works which restore our fellowship with the Father?
5. What are some essentials that Paul repeats again & again throughout these particular verses, but which you see throughout Galatians? Why does Paul want to anchor those in the lives of the church in Galatia? How are those crucial for us as well?
6. How does Christ join someone to himself? What is the result of that action by Christ? How does that cut across cultural & human distinctions in the family of faith? 21st Century social/cultural wrangling about equity, equality, or justice seem to fail repeatedly. How does the Christian family settle those questions? What can we offer the world that the world cannot achieve on its own?
7. How does Paul describe the "time" of Jesus' coming to earth as one of us? What do you think he means? How did the coming of Jesus perfectly satisfy the requirements of the Law?
8. What does Paul say Jesus did for us? Part of the theme of Galatians details these shifts from "prisoner to the Law" to "freedom in Christ," & from "slave" to "child/heir." Discuss the differences you see in those 'shifts.' How does your life reflect those shifts or the struggle to maintain your new status in Christ?
9. Adopted children often struggle to believe they are as much part of their family as biological children are. What has God done to enable believers to know they are truly his children? How does the intimacy of calling God "Abba" (*daddy*) increase your desire to live fully experiencing that intimacy & the assurance of his presence daily? With whom can you share that intimate joy of life in Christ...particularly thinking of someone who does not now experience it as you do?
10. What does this text call you to do?