

Gal.4:1 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,

4:2 but is under guardians and stewards until the time appointed by the father.

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

4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

4:5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

4:7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

February 22, 2026 Galatians 4:1-7

Sermon Title: "You Are Children"

[From Today's Sermon]

Last Wednesday marked the beginning of Lent. We were "held captive under the power of the spirits of this world," enslaved by sin, but the Son's redemption saved us. As Colossians 1:18 states: "God has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves."

Jesus also spoke these words in John 8:

"If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples. And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

The scribes reacted strongly to this word "freedom."

"We are Abraham's descendants and have never been slaves to anyone. How can you say that we will be set free?" And Jesus replied:

"Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be truly free."

In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus prayed in anguish, "Abba, Father." And because of that redemption, we too have become children and can call God the Father "Abba, Father."

Prologue: "Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani (My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?)"

Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?

22:2 My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer; by night, but I find no rest.

22:3 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One; you dwell in the praises of Israel.

22:4 Our ancestors trusted in you; they trusted, and you delivered them.

22:5 They cried out to you and were saved; they trusted in you and were not put to shame.

22:6 But I am a worm and not a man, scorned by everyone, despised by the people.

22:7 All who see me mock me; they sneer and shake their heads, saying,

22:8 "He trusted in the Lord; let the Lord rescue him. Let him deliver him, since he delights in him."

22:9 Yet you brought me forth from the womb; you made me rest securely at my mother's breast.

22:10 From birth I was committed to you; from my mother's womb you have been my God.

22:11 Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

22:12 Many bulls have surrounded me; strong bulls of Bashan have encircled me.

22:13 They open their mouths wide against me, like a ravening and roaring lion.

22:14 I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart has turned to wax within my breast.

22:15 My strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks to the roof of my mouth. You have laid me in the dust of death.

22:16 For dogs have surrounded me; a band of evildoers has encircled me. They have pierced my hands and my feet.

22:17 I can count all my bones; they stare and gloat over me.

22:18 They divide my garments among them and cast lots for my clothing.

22:19 But you, O Lord, do not be far off; O my strength, come quickly to help me.

22:20 Rescue my soul from the sword, my life from the power of the dog.

22:21 Save me from the lion's mouth, my life from the horns of the wild oxen.

22:22 I will declare Your name to my brothers; in the congregation I will praise You.

22:23 Praise the Lord, you who fear him, you descendants of Jacob, honor him, you descendants of Israel.

22:24 For the Lord has regard for the afflicted, he does not despise them; he does not hide his face from them but hears their cry for help.

22:25 From you comes my praise in the great assembly; I will fulfill my vows before those who fear the Lord.

22:26 The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Lord will praise him. May your hearts live forever.

22:27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before Him.

22:28 For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations.

22:29 All who are proud on earth will bow down to the Lord; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him—even those who cannot keep themselves alive.

22:30 Future generations will serve the Lord; they will tell the coming generation about the Lord.

22:31 They will proclaim his salvation to a people yet unborn—the children their children.

Prologue: Abba, Father

Mark 14:34 “My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the point of death. Stay here and keep watch.”

14:35 He went a little farther and fell to the ground and prayed that, if possible, the hour might pass from him. And he said,

14:36 "Abba, Father, everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will."

Prologue: The truth will set you free

John 8:27 They did not understand that he was speaking to them about the Father.

8:28 Then Jesus said to them, “Only after you have lifted up the Son of Man will you realize that I am he, and that I have not been doing anything on my own, but I have spoken just as the Father taught me.

8:29 The one who sent me is with me. He has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases him.”

8:30 As he spoke these things, many believed in him.

8:31 Jesus said to the Jews who had believed in him, “If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples.

8:32 And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”

8:33 They said to him, “We are descendants of Abraham and have never been slaves to anyone. How can you say that we will be set free?”

8:34 Jesus replied, "Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin.

8:35 Now a slave does not remain in the house forever, but a son remains forever.

8:36 So if the Son sets you free, you will be truly free.

8:37 I know that you are Abraham's descendants, yet you are trying to kill me because my word has found no place in you.

8:38 I speak what I have seen with my Father, and you do what you have heard from your father.“

8:39 They answered him, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus said to them, "If you were Abraham's

children, you would do the works of Abraham.

8:40 But now you seek to kill me, a man who has told you the truth that I heard from God. Abraham did not do such things.

8:41 You are doing the works of your father." They said to him, "We were not born of sexual immorality; we have one Father—God."

8:42 Jesus said to them, "If God were your Father, you would love me, for I came from God and am here. I did not come on my own, but he sent me.

8:43 Why do you not understand what I say? It is because you cannot hear my word.

8:44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

8:45 But because I tell the truth, you do not believe me.

8:46 Who among you can accuse me of sin? I speak the truth, so why do you not believe me?

8:47 Whoever is from God hears God's words. The reason you do not hear them is that you are not from God."

8:48 The Jews answered him, "Are we not right in saying that you are a Samaritan and have a demon?"

8:49 Jesus answered, "I do not honor my Father, but you dishonor me.

8:50 I do not seek my own glory; there is one who seeks it, and he is the judge.

8:51 Truly, truly, I say to you, if anyone keeps my word, he will never see death."

8:52 The Jews said, "Now we know that you have a demon! Abraham died, and the prophets died. Yet you say, 'Whoever keeps my word will never taste death.'

8:53 Are you greater than our father Abraham? He died, and the prophets died. Who do you think you are?"

8:54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, the very one you claim as your God.

8:55 You do not know him, but I know him. If I said I did not know him, I would be a liar like you. But I know Him and keep His word.

8:56 Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day, and he saw it and was glad."

8:57 The Jews then said to Him, "You are not yet fifty years old, and have You seen Abraham?"

8:58 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, before Abraham was born, I am."

8:59 So they picked up stones to throw at him, but Jesus hid himself and left the temple.

Good morning, everyone.

It has become thoroughly warm, with April-like weather.

Today's high is 18 degrees, and it seems the highs this week will all be in the double digits. The tension in our bodies, which had been enduring the cold, may suddenly relax, and the fatigue of winter could come flooding out. Pollen may be growing rapidly and dispersing, or yellow sand may be blowing in, potentially triggering allergic reactions. There is still a risk of influenza and other illnesses. Please take good care of yourselves.

We entered Lent last Wednesday. Good Friday, April 3rd, is the day of the Lord's Passion. Three days later, on April 5th, we celebrate the Lord's Resurrection with our Easter worship service.

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from saving me, so far from the words of my groaning?”

This is Psalm 22. It is the passage where Jesus cried out, “Eli, Eli, lema sabachthani?” In the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus also spoke and prayed, “Abba, Father.”

However, the conclusion of Psalm 22 is magnificent.

22:23 Praise the Lord, you who fear him, you descendants of Jacob, honor him, you descendants of Israel.

22:24 For he has regard for the affliction of the afflicted; he does not despise their suffering but hides his face from them and hears their cry for help.

22:25 From you comes my praise in the great assembly; I will fulfill my vows before those who fear the Lord.

22:26 The poor will eat and be satisfied; those who seek the Lord will praise him. May your hearts live forever.

22:27 All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before Him.

22:28 For the kingdom is the Lord's, and He rules over the nations.

22:29 All who are proud on earth will bow before the Lord; all who go down to the dust will kneel before him, even those who cannot keep themselves alive.

22:30 Generation after generation will serve the Lord; people will tell of the Lord to the coming generation,

22:31 proclaiming his salvation to a people yet unborn—

Isaiah 9:1 But the land that was in distress shall no longer be afflicted; the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, where there was the reproach, the way of the sea, the land beyond

the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles—

9:2 the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them a light has shone.

9:3 For you have made his people more numerous and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors exult when dividing the spoil.

9:4 For you have broken the yoke that was on them, the staff on their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, as in the day of Midian.

9:5 Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be burned as fuel for the fire.

9:6 For a child has been born to us, a son given to us. The government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

9:7 Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

Luke 1:76 And you, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High. For you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,

1:77 to give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins.

1:78 Because of the tender mercy of our God, And through His tender mercies, the Sun of Righteousness will rise upon us from on high,

1:79 to shine on those who dwell in darkness and the shadow of death, and to guide our feet into the way of peace."

"The land of suffering will also be free from darkness."

Through the Lord's suffering and redemption, the light of peace has dawned upon us. Truly, we are filled with endless gratitude.

Today, let us again savor the Lord's grace from the Book of Galatians.

4:1 What I mean is this: As long as the heir is a child, he is no different from a slave, even though he is the owner of the entire estate.

4:2 He is under guardians and trustees until the time set by his father.

4:3 So also, when we were children, we were in bondage under the elemental spirits of the world.

4:4 But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

4:5 to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons.

The Jews took pride in being the people of the covenant through the Law of Moses, boasting that they performed the Law without fault, unlike the Gentiles who possessed neither Law, covenant, nor salvation. But as stated in the previous chapters, that was in the past—a story of childhood spent under guardians.

It is reiterated today. Everything becomes clear when the main narrative begins.

“For as long as the heir is a child, though he owns the estate, he is no different from a slave, but is subject to trustees and guardians until the time set by his father. In the same way, when we were children, we were in bondage under the elemental powers of the world.”

1 Corinthians 3:1 Brothers and sisters, I could not speak to you as spiritual people, but rather as people of the flesh, as infants in Christ.

3:2 I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Even now you are not ready, for you are still of the flesh.

3:3 For you are still of the flesh. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh and behaving like ordinary men?

3:4 For when one says, “I follow Paul,” and another, “I follow Apollos,” are you not merely human?

3:5 What, after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Or what is Apollos? Servants through whom you came to believe, as the Lord assigned to each.

3:6 I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.

3:7 So neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God who gives the growth.

“When we were children, we were subject to the so-called spiritual powers of this world.”

How is it that, while claiming to be adults acting with thoughtful, mature judgment, we become bold and push others aside when it comes to becoming adults, increasing our prideful hearts as if only we are great, and forgetting the childlike, forgiving heart?

As we read in 1 Corinthians 3, even among the Lord's disciples there were factions and rivalries. It wasn't necessarily the teachers themselves, but perhaps their disciples who wanted to elevate their own teacher as superior.

“We were enslaved to the various powers of this world.”

“The various powers of this world.” This term can be translated as the fundamental ideas and principles of this world, or perhaps as so-called “common sense.” We have been taught to live according to common sense, but common sense is a vague concept. This term can also be translated as “supernatural spirits possessing the power to influence human destiny.” Whether we live consciously or not, we are placed under the dominion of various forces, both visible and invisible. Even the word “self-discipline” contains the fragility of how much we imperfect beings can truly control ourselves and live rightly.

The law is a wonderful thing, but it is something a powerless child cannot master.

4:5 It was to redeem those under the law, to give us the status of sons.

4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

4:7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir through God.

Because of His love for us, God gave us His beloved Son as a ransom. Within this new covenant of His Son, He justified us, matured us as children of God, and enabled us to taste solid food. Only then can we fulfill the law—the law of love in Christ.

1 Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

13:9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.

13:10 But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away.

13:11 When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child: but when I became a man, I put away childish things.

13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; But then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known.

13:13 And now abide faith, hope, and love, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

Romans 13:8 Owe no one anything except to love one another, for he who loves another has fulfilled the law.

13:9 For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

13:10 Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

In John 8, there is the famous saying, “The truth will set you free.” But the Jews could not understand these words. They stubbornly considered themselves free, not subject to anyone. What about us? It is rare to find a passage where Jesus speaks so plainly about His true nature. Yet, I pray that we may treasure His words—that it is His message that sets people free—and, receiving the wind of the Holy Spirit, be guided by Him this week as well.

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in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.

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8:49 Jesus answered, "I am not possessed by a demon, but I honor my Father, while you dishonor me.

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8:54 Jesus answered, "If I glorify myself, my glory is nothing. It is my Father who glorifies me, the very one you claim as your God.

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8:59 So they picked up stones to stone him, but Jesus hid himself and left the temple.

◇Prayer; Heavenly Father God, **we thank you for today's worship. We have always believed that we are free people, not subject to anything,**

living autonomously, possessing our own free and unshakable convictions unaffected by others. Yet we have come to realize that until we return to our Father God—who loves us beyond measure, who through His Son redeemed and forgave all our sins, who declares to us, "You are precious and honored, and I love you"—we were rootless wanderers without a place to call home. Guide all who suffer into God's salvation and peace. Bless our families and our neighbors. Use us. We pray in the name of the Lord Jesus.