

## Loved Because

### Faith Walking ~ Devotional 9

a devotional series  
hosted at Faith Lifts



#### Galatians 4:1-20

1 Think of it this way. If a father dies and 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 And 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.

8 Before you Gentiles knew God, you were slaves to so-called gods that do not even exist. 9 So now that you know God (or should I say, now that God knows you), why do you want to go back again and become slaves once more to the weak and useless spiritual principles of this world? 10 You are trying to earn favor with God by observing certain days or months or seasons or years. 11 I fear for you. Perhaps all my hard work with you was for nothing. 12 Dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to live as I do in freedom from these things, for I have become like you Gentiles—free from those laws.

You did not mistreat me when I first preached to you. 13 Surely you remember that I was sick when I first brought you the Good News. 14 But even though my condition tempted you to reject me, you did not despise me or turn me away. No, you took me in and cared for me as though I were an angel from God or even Christ Jesus himself. 15 Where is that joyful and grateful spirit you felt then? I am sure you would have taken out your own eyes and given them to me if it had been possible. 16 Have I now become your enemy because I am telling you the truth?

17 Those false teachers are so eager to win your favor, but their intentions are not good. They are trying to shut you off from me so that you will pay attention only to them. 18 If someone is eager to do good things for you, that's all right; but let them do it all the time, not just when I'm with you.

19 Oh, my dear children! I feel as if I'm going through labor pains for you again, and they will continue until Christ is fully developed in your lives. 20 I wish I were with you right now so I could change my tone. But at this distance I don't know how else to help you.

Sisters, grab a seat next to me on the couch, as it is time for a family meeting. Abba is very concerned about our faith. He wants to set us straight. It may be hard for us to hear this message, but we need to remember that He loves us. Abba knows that we will have trouble here on this earth, while we wait to be with Him face-to-face, so He graciously gave us His word in the Bible to bring us His instruction. He loves us so much that He took the time to provide lessons through the lives of other brothers and sisters that have struggled, like us, so that we can learn from them.

Yes, our family members in Galatia had difficulty understanding some of the basic truths of our faith and family history. Abba knew of this problem, so He sent Paul to them as a spiritual father, to share the truth. Even though Paul was only a brother in the family of God, he had great understanding of the lesson that needed to be explained as well as a deep love for his spiritual children. He was motivated to share the truth for Abba's sake. He understood they had great difficulty understanding the family heritage, so in this particular lesson, he breaks it down bit by bit. He shared with them about being adopted into the

family through Christ so they could be set free from the law (v. 5-6). He also told them that they could not earn favor with God through obeying the law, because in Christ this law no longer was a requirement. Paul was very concerned that they lost the joy they had when they first heard the message and accepted it as truth (v. 15).

Sisters, I think we, too, have difficulty with this lesson about belonging to Abba. We think that we must do something to earn his love. We think of adoption in terms of being the child instead of the parent. We look at ourselves and find all the reasons why someone wouldn't love us, instead of considering the truth that we are incredibly loveable because of who made us. We go about attempting to demonstrate to God why we should be worthy of His love.

Dear sister, for a moment, imagine yourself deciding that you would like to adopt a child. (Many of you have gone through this experience or may even be in the process, so this will be an especially tender message for you to hear.) Now dig deep into your heart and look at the reasons why you want to adopt. Concentrate on your heart's cry. Chances are, you want to adopt because you have love to give and want a child, in particular, to share it with. You may also feel passionate about adopting because you see the need for children everywhere to receive unconditional love.

In reality, adoption is never about what you'll get out of the relationship, but because of what you passionately want to give—love, protection, hope. An adopted child has done nothing to earn your love. The little soul may be disrespectful, solemn, angry, hurtful, dirty, messed up, broken to the core. She may be cheerful, beautifully clothed, charming, and grateful. Either way, you, as the adoptive parent, are not adopting because of what this child can give you—you know that can never be guaranteed, even if the moment seems promising—but because you have something burning inside of you that must be given away. Love.

This is why God has adopted us as His children. It is not because of what we can give or who we are, but because of what HE can give and WHO He is!

#### JOHN 3:16

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son,  
so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

#### GALATIANS 4:5-6

God sent him (Jesus) to buy freedom for us who were slaves to the law,  
so that he could adopt us as his very own children.  
And because we are his children,  
God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts,  
prompting us to call out "Abba, Father."

*Abba, Father, we cry out to you. Transform our understanding so that we would believe wholeheartedly that we are loved, not because we are loveable, but because you are loving. Father, we pray that you would enable us to take a rightful place in your family and experience the blessing that comes from being an heir of Christ. In Jesus' precious name, Amen.*

#### **Faith Walking**

- ❑ Take a few minutes to jot down what you think you receive as an heir to Christ.
- ❑ Look up "inheritance" in the concordance in your Bible or at [Biblegateway.com](http://Biblegateway.com). Focus on these verses, in particular: Psalm 33:13, Acts 20:32, Ephesians 1:11, Colossians 3:24

- You are a daughter in God's kingdom as well as a spiritual mother. In this regard, who can you spiritually adopt today and love unconditionally?

### **The Next Step**

Pray for the Lord to open your eyes to the ways you try to earn His favor. Also pray for an increased understanding of what it means to accept your inheritance and become a spiritual mother. Write down a few key Scripture truths from today and try to memorize them over the next week. Also read ahead, to the end of chapter 4 in Galatians.

### ***Faith Walking Challengers...***

Can you believe you've made it through to week 9? Only four more weeks to go until we're done with Galatians! Has it been worth it? What have you learned so far? Be sure to leave a comment or a link to your blog post. We love to hear from you!