

WEEK 4: CHAPTER 4

ABOUT THIS SERIES

In our *Galatians* series, St. Mark is walking verse-by-verse and chapter-by-chapter through Paul's letter to the Galatians to discover how an ancient manuscript like Galatians gives us timeless truths for today. Your group will go deeper into the series by learning about the cultural and scriptural context to Paul's letter.

ITEMS NEEDED

- Bibles

CHECKLIST BEFORE YOUR GROUP ARRIVES

- Pray for your group
- Read through the Discussion Guide
- Refreshments (optional)
- Clean meeting area
- Clean bathroom
- Crack front door

OPENING (5 MIN)

After a general welcome, say: Icebreaker time! Let's take turns—

FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE SIBLINGS, DID YOU GET ALONG WITH THEM OR NAH?

ONE MORE—DO ANY OF YOU HAVE ANY FAMILY MEMBERS WHO WERE ADOPTED?

After a brief discussion, say: Today, as we continue our Galatians series, we'll look at the Law and Gospel through the lens of adoption and sibling rivalry. It's a different view that changes the way we think about faith and our relationship with our heavenly Father.

We'll talk all about that in a minute, but first, let's pray.

OPENING PRAYER (1 MIN)

Host, lead the group in prayer.

KEY VERSES (5 MIN)

After a prayer, say: Let's bring everyone up to speed with key verses from Galatians 4:

CAN SOMEONE READ THE FOLLOWING VERSES, AND I'LL READ THE SUMMARY:

VERSE	SUMMARY
Vs. 1	Paul tells us living under the Law is like living as a child under a harsh school teacher and, after Christ, when we've "come of age" and are no longer under the Law.
Vs. 4-6	When we are adopted by God through our baptism, the Holy Spirit within us cries out with the most-basic of a child's words, "Abba".
Vs. 19-20	Paul tells the Galatians his joy for them is not just that they have faith in Christ, but that they become like him.
Vs. 22-23	Paul compares living under the Law to the story of Abraham and Isaac. A story we'll get into in just a moment.

WHICH OF THESE KEY VERSES INTRIGUES YOU THE MOST, AND WHY?**ADOPTION (15-20 MIN)**

After a discussion, say: During Sunday's sermon Pastor Chris talked about adoption and said, "Your adoption doesn't mean you stop thinking like an orphan." An orphan has a scarcity mindset, they fight and cheat and steal to survive because no one is taking care of them. Even after entering a new family and an adoption, it's hard to stop living like an orphan. Suddenly, you and I have a new way to think about our sin.

HOW DOES THE IDEA THAT YOU'RE ACTING LIKE AN ORPHAN CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT LIVING IN SIN AND REBELLION?**HOW DOES THE IDEA THAT YOU'RE A CHILD OF GOD CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK ABOUT LIVING IN TRUST AND OBEDIENCE?****SPEAKING OF YOUR ADOPTION—DOES IT FEEL TOO IRREVERENT THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT INSIDE OF YOU CALLS OUT TO GOD AS "DAD"?****ISHMAEL AND ISAAC (15-20 MIN)**

After a discussion, say: Paul closes chapter 4 using Isaac and Ishmael as a metaphor of living under the Old Covenant with the Law and living under the New Covenant with faith in Christ. Let's take a moment to read about that story in Genesis.

CAN SOMEONE READ GENESIS 16:1-16 ALOUD FOR US?**ARE YOU MORE IMPRESSED BY GOD'S PUNISHMENT OR COMPASSION FOR HAGAR?**

WHAT ASPECTS OF LIFE IN THE DESERT COMPARES TO LOOKING TO THE LAW TO JUSTIFY US?**WHAT ASPECTS OF LIFE IN THE TENTS OF ABRAHAM COMPARES TO LOOKING TO CHRIST TO JUSTIFY US?**

After the reading, say: Thanks be to God, by faith we are sons and daughters of Abraham through faith in the works of Christ, and we have received the full inheritance as heirs.

Later in his life, Paul wrote these words from Romans 8:16-18 that will serve as our closing thought today, “The Holy Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children. Now if we are children, then we are heirs— heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings, we will also share in his glory.”

Amen.

CLOSING ANNOUNCEMENT AND PRAYER (5 – 7 MIN)

Don’t forget to grab a yard sign to invite your neighbors to celebrate Easter with us.

Let’s close things out with prayer—

ARE THERE ANY PRAYER REQUESTS TODAY?

Host, after taking prayer requests, close the group in prayer.