

Bible Text: Leviticus 23:24-25; Galatian 4:4-6

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SERMON TEXT:

Galatians 4:4-6 (KJV) *But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*

In Ephesians 1:11, we read God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." No, that does not mean that God is the author of sin. It means that He controls and restrains evil to accomplish His will. If you don't understand that, you don't understand the Bible. Peter preaching in Acts 2 told those people who had crucified the Lord, he said, "Him, ye have taken," He was delivered up by the will and counsel of God, "Him have you taken and with wicked hands have crucified the Lord of glory. Him, being delivered," he said, "by the determined counsel and foreknowledge of God."

What does that mean? That which was purposed and planned before time began, God never did begin to exist, He has always existed. Time is but a parenthesis in God's eternal plan. I don't know all the details of that eternal plan. The Book of Deuteronomy will tell you that there are some things that are secret unto God. Man in his stupidity is always trying to explain the secret things of God. All that he does is to find himself in a cobweb tangled up with his own philosophies. We have God's written Word as His inspired message to His people. It tells us what His plan and purpose is for us and for the whole universe throughout time.

Here in this text, Paul tells us that in the fullness of time God sent forth His Son. We have just passed through the Christmas season. Of course, I don't have to tell you, but what the world says is the Birthday of Christ, is not. The 25th of December is not the birth date of Christ. We all have a tendency sometimes, and it is easy to go to extremes. Did you ever get behind a car sometimes and you see the car is just running right on the right-hand edge of the road? That's a young driver who's just learning to drive and they're afraid to hit someone head-on, and so they are driving right on the very edge, almost about to go off the road because they are afraid of hitting someone on the left. If it was not for that rumble strip on the right-hand side, they would go off the road. Then you meet other

drivers sometimes that doesn't have good judgment on the right-side. Maybe some older person, and they're afraid they're going to run off to the right-hand side, and so they're driving right on the centerline. Of course, the safest place to drive is in the middle of the lane, staying away from both sides. That is what happens to us sometimes, we go to extremes trying to avoid something we think is bad.

There are some Christians who have a proper understanding about the birth of Christ. Those people don't want anything to do with Christ-Mass, and that's what it is. December the 25th was a day chosen by the Roman Catholic Church as the date of Christ's birth. That date was originally a pagan holiday. So, the Catholic Church adopted that date to celebrate the birth of Christ with a special Mass service. It was a means to seduce the world to accept their version of Christianity.

December the 25th is not the date of Christ's birth, so sometimes Christians, who don't want anything to do with Christmas, fall into an extreme. Now that's wrong also. There's nothing wrong with celebrating or recognizing the virgin birth of Christ, whatever date you want to, except don't make it December 25th and don't celebrate the by a Catholic Mass.

Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God took on a sinless human body by the virgin birth that He might dwell among us. It is a Biblical doctrine. It is a vital, critical, important doctrine, and it is basic to the whole ministry of Jesus Christ. He had to become human flesh and He did it in a very unique way. He did it by His virgin birth in the village of Bethlehem. This was all prophesied in the Old Testament, even back in Genesis, chapter three and verse fifteen. There God made the very first Gospel promise concerning the coming of His Son, as the seed of woman.

Usually, in the Bible, the word "seed" is used in the masculine sense but there it is used in an unusual way, "the seed of woman." Even the rabbis could not fully understand this verse. It is a prophecy concerning the virgin birth of Jesus Christ and His ministry. Make no mistake about it, the virgin birth of Jesus Christ is critically important to the ministry of Christ as our Redeemer and High Priest.

As our church members know, I have written in detail on this subject. I hope all of you have a copy of the book and have read it. Read it again! It is an important subject. I have just finished re-reading it and I rejoice in the truths set forth in that book. I was moved to write the book because I came to be aware that there was still in existence an old heresy that I thought had died back in the third century. I thought it had been proven to be a false teaching and been buried long ago. But I've learned even in this modern day, some preachers who are doctrinally sound on other subjects, have a misconception about the body of Jesus Christ. This is an old heresy called Docetism. It goes back to the first two or three centuries in which some were trying to understand and explain how God would come to earth and exist in a sinless body.

Various ideas have been put forth about the birth of Christ. Some referred to it as being the phantom doctrine, that Christ was not really God, but He only manifested himself like a spirit or an angel. He was just here. However, that's not what the Bible teaches. The Word of God says that God sent forth His Son, made of woman. If you take the woman out of that, we do not have a Savior. Women are very important to the work of God's kingdom here on earth.

Sometimes women get the impression that they are not important in the work of God. They think, all the important work is for pastors, deacons, and other men. I want to tell you the Bible teaches right to the contrary. Every time we follow human reasoning or human philosophy, we come up with wrong ideas that create problems. Biblical Christianity promotes, and protects women. In the Bible, women are very important and have contributed a great deal as workers in the kingdom of God.

Many people have had a problem trying to understand the virgin birth of Christ. Some have denied it completely and others have advocated false teachings about it. How could God become human? The Roman Catholics tried to solve the problem by their doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. I used to think that the term referred to Christ's birth, and I didn't have any real problem with that terminology, until I began to read and study more about what they mean by the term.

The doctrine of Immaculate Conception is not referring to Christ's birth but to Mary's birth. They teach she was conceived, not having any sin, therefore she could give Christ a sinless body. No, she was born a sinner like all of us and in Luke's Gospel, chapter one, she calls God her Saviour. All people that have ever lived since Adam sinned, regardless of who or what your parents are, we all are born sinners. We all are sinners, and we all have gone astray. There's none that seek after the Lord, no, not one, and only by God's sovereign electing grace are we ever brought to know Jesus Christ as our Savior.

The critical issue about celebrating the birth of Christ is the date, December 25th. We don't recognize December 25th, as the day of Christ's birth and we don't want to join the world in celebrating a Catholic-Mass. As I have already said, I have no objection to anyone celebrating or recognizing, and rejoicing in the birth of Christ any other time they may choose to do, but not on December 25th. The virgin birth of Jesus Christ is a critical part of our salvation. However, there's no scripture in the Bible that says Christians are to celebrate His birthday. We rejoice in it as a Biblical event in fulfillment of prophecy. It was necessary in order for Him to have a human body to die for the sins of His people.

The Bible gives us some facts about His birth so we can know that it happened as God prophesied it would. Christ was born of a virgin as it was prophesied in Isaiah 7:14. He was born in Bethlehem as prophesied by the prophet Micah. There are some other Biblical facts given about Christ's birth including the shepherds and the wise men, but some of the rest of the so-called Christmas story is tradition. We do not believe that tradition has any place in Biblical worship. The most important story in the Bible is the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. That is what the Gospel is all about.

That's what God would have us to remember by worshipping the resurrected Christ on the Lord's Day. Christians should be meeting every Lord's Day to celebrate and rejoice that we have a risen Savior. Christianity is a unique religion. In all the world, it is the only one that has a risen Savior. That is what we need to celebrate.

So, when was Christ born? I have here in the auditorium a chart that you all can see. It is the work of Elder Robert Hale. He is a Primitive Baptist elder who lives in Huntsville, AL. Most of you here know him as a highly esteemed elder. Elder Hale is not only sound in doctrine, but he is a Bible scholar. If there ever was a man entitled to a doctor's degree in theology, he is one. Elder Hale created the chart before you. It shows both the Jewish calendar and the Julian calendar we use. Using this chart along with the Bible, the approximate time of the birth of Christ can be established. The Jews had two calendar years, a religious year, and a civil year.

There is a lot of difference between the Jewish calendar and our Julian calendar that we use. The months are not the same, they don't start and end the same. The Jewish religious calendar begins on the month of Nisan which is about the same as our April. But the civil year begins the seventh month of the religious calendar and that's the month of Tishri. There are three Jewish Holy Days in that month. The first of the month of Tishri is the Feast of Trumpets. I will talk more about that in a minute. Next, on the tenth day of the month, is the Day of Atonement, and then on the fifteenth day of the month, there was the Feast of Tabernacles. I'm not going to talk about these three feasts except the Feast of Trumpets or the Feast of Blowing as it is set forth in Leviticus 23: 23-25. Please turn there in your Bible and follow along as I read.

Leviticus 23:23-25 (KJV) *And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, saying, In the seventh month, in the first day of the month, shall ye have a sabbath, a memorial of blowing of trumpets, an holy convocation. Ye shall do no servile work therein: but ye shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.*

The Lord told Israel, by Moses, that on the “*first day of the month (Tishri) ye shall have a sabbath.*” Now a Sabbath is a rest day. It doesn't make any difference what day of the week it fell on. Everybody thinks that a Sabbath means Saturday. No, the word Sabbath simply means a rest day, a holy day. So, the first day or the first of the 7th month, which was the beginning of the new civil year. On that day, the beginning of a new civil year, there was to be a blowing of trumpets or horns, which is the correct word.

I hate to say anything against the King James, but the word trumpet is not in the Hebrew. It really should be the word *horns* because the word trumpets will mislead you. What immediately comes to your mind is the blowing of the trumpets by the priest at the Temple in Jerusalem. They were to blow their trumpets to announce the beginning of a new day by the rising of the sun or the ending of the day by the rising of the moon. Their days didn't go by a clock, they didn't have digital clocks like we have today, only trumpets blowing in Jerusalem. But on this day, trumpets were not used. The word *trumpet* is not in the Hebrew text. In the 29th chapter of Numbers, Young's literal

translation will tell you that it is *a blowing, a blowing of sound*. The commentaries say curved animals' horns were used. It was a time of blowing of horns and making noise.

What's so importance about all of this? Well, let me go on and read verse 25. "*Ye shall do no servile work.*" Now that's important. The whole day, no work, "*therein but you shall offer an offering made by fire unto the LORD.*" The rest of the chapter deals with the Day of Atonement ten days later. This day, the first day of the civil year, was a unique day. When you read the various commentaries about it, they all have different ideas as to what the significance of it is. It was an important day, it was to be a Holy Convocation, an annual event. This day was to be a day of blowing horns, of making noise throughout the land of Israel. It was not to be just the priests, but every person in the nation of Israel was responsible to do something to make some noise. What is it all about?

Few people today remember May 8, 1945. I do. I was a five-year old boy, living in West Virginia. It was the end of World War 2 in Europe. I remember that day very well. My mother had three brothers in the War. My dad had two brothers who were prisoners of war in Europe. We didn't have television, or internet. Some had radios that gave the news in the evening. But I remember that day because of all the noise that was made. It was a quiet country morning, until suddenly we heard a church bell ringing. The sound came from across the mountains over in Matewan. None of the country churches had bells, only the city churches. Not everyone had a radio, and they were only on in the evening to get the news. But I remember the day very well because everyone was so excited, the war was over and everyone was trying to show their excitement by making noise, car horns were blowing without stopping. I even had a wash pan and was running around beating on it. The war was over, it was a time for celebration and making noise.

Well, that's what I think it must have been like in Israel on the first day of Tishri. It was the beginning of a New Year. The Jews had been celebrating this New Year ever since they left Egypt. Some thought it was because they had been delivered from bondage. Some thought it was because they were headed to Canaan, they were not sure, but it was a time of celebration, and a time of making noise. They were celebrating the beginning of a New Year. But could there be another purpose? A much more significant one?

Today, all over the world, people celebrate the beginning of a New Year. How did it get started? Some say it has its origin in China, with their fireworks. Maybe, but the blowing of horns and making noise? Could it have been carried out into the world by the Jews that were scattered into various countries all over the world? I don't know, but this I do know, God told Israel that on the first day of the beginning of the New Year, they were to have a Holy Convocation of the blowing of horns. I believe it was the first day of the month of Tishri that Jesus Christ was born in Bethlehem.

Let me give you something else to think about. The late Elder Grady Dearman, lived at Laurel, Mississippi. He was a very intelligent man. He was as a bridge inspector for the State of Mississippi. Elder Dearman purchased a special computer program that would show the alignment of all the stars and planets on any day, from any part of world. I have

here today, two books written by Elder Dearman. Using his advanced computer program, Elder Dearman charted the alignments of the stars and planets as they were aligned in the years of Jesus Christ's earthly ministry. His conclusion, based on his research and historical data was that Christ was born August 26, 2 BC; Elul 23, 3759. Elder Hale and Elder Dearman, working separately and using two different methods, arrived at a date only a few days difference. Their conclusion was that Christ was born in the early part of Tishri or about the middle of September according to our Julian calendar.

Some will say, "That's crazy. That's just some ignorant preachers coming up with something like that." I have in my files an article written by a professor at Vanderbilt University, in Nashville, TN. The title of the article is "Could Astrology Explain the Bethlehem Star?" It was written by David Weintraub, a professor of Astronomy at the University. It was published on The Conversation, an online website on December 23, 2014. I cannot give you the whole article here, but I will share some of the information. The article goes into detail to explain how there could have been such an alignment of stars and planets to have caused a "star in the east" to be seen which "would have suggested to ancient Greek astrologers a regal horoscope and a royal birth."

All Israel did not fully understand the significance about the blowing of horns on the first day of Tishri, but God had a purpose for it. He had planned the celebration for the birth of Christ hundreds of years before it ever happened. The birth of Christ was going to be celebrated in Israel in a unique way. It was even celebrated by angels sent with a Heavenly message.

The birth of Christ is a Biblical, historical fact that cannot be denied. The reason Christians should not have anything to do with Christmas is because what it really is. First, because historically, December 25th was a pagan holiday. According to what the Encyclopedia Britannica says, December 25th was the birthday of Mithra, the pagan Unconquered Sun God.

Second, no true Christian should celebrate Christmas, because it is a Catholic Mass service, Christ-mass. Unless you have been trained in Catholic doctrine, you don't understand what a Catholic Mass is. In the Mass, according to Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation, the wine in the cup, when blessed by the priest, becomes the literal blood of Christ. The same with the wafer, it literally becomes the physical body of Christ. It is in essence a re-crucifixion of Christ. No Christian anywhere who understands anything about the crucifixion of Jesus Christ and His dying once and for all for sins would want to have anything to do with the Mass. It is an ungodly, blasphemous pagan service. When you celebrate and have any participation in Christmas, whether you mean to or not, you are condoning and supporting the concept of the wrong date for the birth of Christ and an ungodly, blasphemous Mass, a pagan Catholic Mass.

So, what is the correct date of birth of Jesus Christ? That's not most important thing. The most important issue is that Christ was born of a virgin in fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies. His birth was the means to fulfill the need that you and I have as a Redeemer Savior. That's what is important and that's what we need to be talking about. In

the fullness of time, at God's appointed time, whenever it was, because everything moves by God's clock, by God's plan. The prophet had said, "Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a son." That's the reason why Mary was a virgin, and that's the reason why God told Joseph, "Don't hesitate to take her to be your wife because that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost."

Joseph knew they had never been together in a sexual manner. That's the reason it took a special visit by an angel to assure him that it was alright for him to take her as a wife. "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife for that which in her is of the Holy Ghost" (Matt.1:20). They traveled from Nazareth down to Bethlehem because it was prophesied. Nazareth was their hometown, but they had to go to Bethlehem to register and pay their taxes. They went to Bethlehem because it was the plan of God. Micah had said, "In Bethlehem." Every detail about the birth of Jesus Christ was in fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies. He was born at God's time and in God's way. Wherever and whenever Christ was born, it was all part of God's divine purpose, and that's what we need to keep in mind.

One of the important things to understand about the birth of Christ and it's one of those things that gets lost in the world's celebration of Christmas. It is not the beginning of His existence. He is the eternal Son of God. He has always existed before time ever began. He was always with God the Father. He is the Creator of the universe, and nothing was made without Him. He is the King of kings and the Lord of lords even before time began. The world does not want to honor Him as the Sovereign Creator of the universe. They like the little baby in a manger, that's a sweet little story. The problem is getting the story right. If you don't get it right, it's a violation of the Word of God. It is blasphemy.

Another important issue is who was born of the virgin Mary. It was the Eternal Son of God, and He took upon Himself a sinless human body, conceived in the womb of the virgin. How? The only way possible was by the power of God by the Holy Spirit. God can work miracles. He brought man into existence out of the dust of the earth. He spoke the universe into existence, and He holds it all in the power of His hands. He can cause the blind to see, the lame to walk and the leper to be healed. God Almighty, by the Holy Spirit, came down into the womb of Mary, He assumed a sinless human body, and became the God-man. It's not the beginning of His existence as the Son of God, but it's the beginning of His existence as the God-man.

Why is this so critically important to understand? His birth was the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophets. He was to be of the seed of Abraham. God made a promise to Abraham when He said, "Unto thy seed," singular. Paul, when writing in the Book of Galatians, in the third chapter, tells us that God used the word "seed" in the singular. God preserved His word. Listen, it's important to understand that God preserves His Word. You and I have a preserved Word of God, and God has preserved His Word down through the centuries. God said to Abraham, "I will bless thy seed and, in thy seed, shall all the families of the earth be blessed." I'm not trying to take anything from anyone, except to tell you it is in Christ Jesus that the blessing of Abraham comes to all His elect. Paul will tell you in Galatians, if you are Christ's then are you Abraham's seed.

Not only is Christ of the seed of Abraham, but He is also of the seed of David. In Romans the first chapter, turn to it, please, in your Bible. Romans one, begin at verse one, "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God, (Which he had promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures,)." Hallelujah. What we have in the New Testament is a fulfillment of what the prophets said in the Old Testament.

Look at verse 3, "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh." The Holy Spirit of God guided and gave every word here exactly as He would have us to understand it. It's not the beginning of the existence of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ does not have Birthdays; He is the Eternal Son of God. We can celebrate when He was made manifest in the flesh, but we must understand it right. He was made of the seed of David according to the flesh. Sinless flesh, but flesh. It's critical that we understand His eternity and His humanity correctly.

There are two things we must understand about the death of Jesus Christ. The two words are, vicarious and expiatory. What do those words mean? They are theological words, but they are also legal terms. Vicarious means substitute. You know who claims to be the Vicar of Jesus Christ? The Pope of Rome, and what the word vicar means is in the place of. The Pope has the audacity, the blasphemous audacity to say he stands in the place of Jesus Christ. Antichrist he is. That is what all the old Baptists in days past called the Pope. You want to see the Antichrist? Look to Rome when he comes out on that balcony, and everybody is applauding him, he is the Vicar of Christ they say. No, he's the Antichrist. The word vicarious is critically important because to be a proper substitute for you and me. Jesus Christ must have flesh and blood that He could die for our sins and be our Redeemer.

The Apostle Paul will tell us in the Book of Hebrews the tenth chapter, that it's not possible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin. All those Old Testament sacrifices, what did they do? They were simply a check written for the payment of sin. God wrote a check every year on the Day of Atonement. Israel made a sacrifice on the Day of Atonement for the sins of the whole nation and God was saying by that there is going to come a day when the Lamb of God will come forth born of a virgin, and he will be made manifest as being the Son of God. But He will be made flesh and He will come and go to the cross, and He will die for the sins of His elect people. Again, for Christ to die for us, He must have flesh and blood, for without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins.

Christ Jesus had a sinless body. All through His life, for three and a half years, He proved that He was human. He grew up. He was born of a virgin, wrapped in swaddling clothes, nursed by his mother, cared for as a baby. At the age of twelve, He astounded the doctors of His day in the temple because He said, "I must be about my Father's business." Joseph was not his father. Joseph was a carpenter. Jesus Christ's Father was His Heavenly Father and He said, "Our Father, which art in heaven." That's His Father. You and I have a spiritual Father because of Christ Jesus, who is our elder brother. We have been adopted, but Christ was uniquely the only Begotten Son. He is the Eternal Son of God, never having any beginning. We don't understand that. I don't understand it, and I'm not going

to try to explain it to you, just say, "By faith, it is." Always was and never will change. He changes not. The Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end before time ever began, He existed. When time is folded up and comes to an end, He will still be in existence, the Eternal Son of God.

Christ's death was an expiatory death. Expiatory means to correct that which is wrong, paying the penalty for an offense. In Isaiah the 53rd chapter, we read that God laid upon him the iniquity of us all. Now I want to tell you, that's not for every individual, that is the work of God the Father for His elect people. It is His elect in all ages, among all races, whoever they are, wherever they may be, rich or poor, whatever their skin color, it doesn't make any difference. The elect are His sheep, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. He knew them and who it was that He was going to the cross to die for. There was a marvelous transaction that took place on the cross of Calvary. God made Him to be sin for His elect people. All their sins were laid on Him and He paid the sin debt for them. God laid upon Christ the sin and punishment of all His people.

Christ suffered and shed His blood for His people. The soldier came but did not break a bone of His body because it had been said "not a bone of His body shall be broken." The soldier took the spear, and did something that was different and unusual, he pierced the side of Christ that blood and water might come forth. Why? So that we could see, and the record would be made known, that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, shed His precious blood for the sins of His people. I believe that He, by the Holy Spirit, took that blood and entered the Holy of Holies and sprinkled the mercy seat as the Great High Priest of God for the sins of His people. Why? Because He was made flesh and blood for us.

Now listen, His death must be vicarious and expiatory that He might satisfy the just Law of God. Man's laws are not always just, but God is just, and His laws are just. Everything that man does has its fallacies, but the Law of God is just because God is just. The Law of God said, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for tooth, and a hand for a hand, and a foot for a foot." That's the just Law of God. That's the reason an animal cannot die for our sins. It must be a proper substitute, it had to be a human being. Christ must have a sinless human body that He could die for the sins of His people. When Christ died on the cross, He died for sins, not His sins, but for all the sins of His chosen people. The Word of God says that God "hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him."

When Christ died on the cross of Calvary, we were in Him. He died for our sins. Oh, "amazing grace, how can it be that thou, my God, should die for me?" The only reason, the only explanation is because of the sovereign grace of God. Sovereign grace! God chose us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world "that we should be holy and without blame before Him, in love, having predestinated us unto the adoption of children." Ephesians, chapter one, verses 4 and 5. Read it and rejoice in it.

Christ must have a sinless human body by which He could fulfill the threefold office of the Messiah as prophet, priest, and king. The prophet is one anointed by God to speak for God. The priest is one taken from among the people to represent them to God. The king,

Lord of lords and King of kings, is the title of Jesus Christ alone. He fulfilled all three of those offices. I urge you again to read my book on the virgin birth. If you have already read it, read it again. I did this past week and was thrilled and thankful to the Lord for giving me the thoughts and the resources to write the book. It is amazing how God put material and resources available to me to write the book for God's people.

Again, the important thing is that Jesus Christ must have a body like ours to come forth from the grave. The resurrection of Christ proves our resurrection. Do you believe in the resurrection? Most certainly we do. Why do you believe it? Because Christ was resurrected from the dead. There were witnesses, men who knew Him from the time that He was baptized by John the Baptist, who walked with Him, who ate with Him, who talked with Him, who heard Him teach, and who saw Him for three and a half years. John saw Him on the cross.

There were witnesses who saw Him taken down from the cross and laid in the tomb. There were witnesses who saw the empty sepulchre, there were witnesses who saw the grave clothes laying in the tomb. There were men and women who saw the empty tomb with grave clothes. Peter could hardly believe it. Everyone else stopped outside the tomb, but Peter ran in. He had to see, and we have record, we have in God's inspired Word, "He's not here, He is risen."

Walking on the road to Emmaus that evening was two mourning, grieving disciples. We can understand why. Can you not relate how it was? "Oh, we had such hope and expectation. We thought He was going to be the deliverer of Israel. We thought we were going to... but now he's dead. They buried him." God had to open their eyes to see Jesus Christ. Those two men were filled with doubts, but God opened their eyes, and gave them faith to understand, "Did not our hearts burn?" They had an inward witness of the Spirit.

We read a moment ago in the fourth chapter of Galatians that, "In the fullness of time, God sent forth his Son made of woman and made him to be under the law that we might receive the adoption as children. And because ye are sons, God has sent forth His Spirit, crying, Abba, Father in our hearts."

I cannot prove to you the resurrection of Christ, but I know He is alive today because of the inward witness of the Holy Spirit in my heart. I cannot prove to you, your salvation, but when you have that inward witness of the Holy Spirit in your heart, you know it is all true. Don't go by how you feel or what others say, but trust the inward witness of the Holy Spirit in your heart.

People say, "Don't go by your feelings." There are some feelings that are good emotions, if they're produced by the Holy Spirit of God. When you can get off in your closet or wherever you may be, and you think there's no one that can help, no one hears, no one cares, then you begin to talk to your Heavenly Father and then the Spirit comes and says, "He hears you and He cares."

Did you ever take your child upon your lap? They come to Daddy. Usually run to Mommy, but sometimes something special they come to Daddy. What's daddy going to do? You take them upon your lap, and you hold them, you hug them, and you tell them you love them. "What's your problem child?" Maybe you couldn't solve it, maybe they couldn't really tell you, but you give him some loving comfort.

That's what our Heavenly Father does. He takes you on His lap and hugs you and the Holy Spirit causes you to say, "Papa, Father." If you're a child of God, you know what I'm talking about. You've run to your Heavenly Father sometimes ashamed to call him Father, sometimes even doubting and questioning, if He will hear or do anything, you feel so all alone. But the Holy Spirit speaks to your heart and says, "He heard." That's all you need to know, "He heard. He knows. It's in His hands. He'll take care of it." You don't know just how, but you know He loves you and He will take care of it. May not be exactly what you want Him to do but He'll give you peace about it. You understand that what He is doing, and what's going on is for your good. Why? Because He's the risen Savior, who loved you and died for you.

He's alive today and when our cries go to His ears by the Holy Spirit of God and He says to us, "I'm alive," and our hearts respond by the Holy Spirit says, "Papa Father," all Hell can't shake you from that. You know there's an empty tomb somewhere. You also know that because He lives, He sits at the right hand of God the Father.

You know, assuredly, that He is able to save unto the uttermost, all that come to God by Him, in faith, seeing He ever lives, and you know that you have an Advocate with the Father, that can be touched with the feelings of your infirmities, and He can sympathize with you. Why? Because He was made flesh. He was tempted in all points like as we are yet without sin. He's not dead, He's alive and someday He's coming back. "If I go away, I'll come again and receive you where I am there that you may be also." Neither death nor this wicked world, can separate us from Him.

Christ is coming again. When He comes the dead in Christ are going to rise first with glorified bodies. The living saints at that time will also be changed, in a moment, to have glorified bodies also, and together we will all be caught up with them to meet the Lord in the air. We will be with Him forever and forever. Hallelujah, what a Savior. He's alive today because He was born, died, and rose again that He might be our Redeemer and Savior. He's coming again, let us pray.

Our Father, oh how we, how we want to thank you, praise you because you loved us, and sent your Son to die for us. O God, help us, Lord. We are so weak. We're so frail. And we want to worship our Savior. We want him to get all the honor and all the glory. O Lord, help us. May you speak to our hearts, Lord, go with us throughout this coming year. O God, be with your people throughout the world. In Jesus' name I pray. Amen. Amen.