

**Galatians 4: 3-6; “God Sent Forth His Son”, A Sermon for the Christmas Season,
Delivered by Pastor Paul Rendall on December 26th, 2021
In the Afternoon Worship Service.**

It says here in verse 4 that there was a fullness of time which had come in the world's history, and it was at that precise time that God sent forth His Son. This means that in God's holy mind there were things which He had carefully considered in relation to what the world was like, when He would send His Son into it. It was a time when many of the Jewish people were not really looking for God's Messiah to come, but they most certainly needed Him to appear right, when He did. For they had fallen into the worst kind of legalism in their thinking; trusting in their own righteousness rather than God's. They viewed themselves as righteous, when really they were great sinners against the Lord. And then, it was also a time when the nations very much needed Christ to appear; He who alone was the Light of the World. Darkness had covered the earth, and deep darkness the peoples. And so, I want to show you that God the Father sent forth His Son just the right time; so that He could accomplish redemption in a way, in which He would receive the greatest glory, and men would be helped in the greatest possible way.

1st of all – God sent forth His Son at the right time; to free men from their bondage under the elemental things of the world. (verse 3)

For it was Adam's sin at the beginning of the world, which brought about all men's natural bondage to sin, when each of them is born into the world. But God wanted to wait for some thousands of years to prove this. You ask, “Why was this so?” “Why couldn't God have sent forth His Son in the beginning, right after Adam's fall into sin; that fall that plunged our whole race into sin and misery?” I answer you: Well God did manifest His deep and abiding concern for man's eternal welfare at that time. He did manifest His love for fallen Adam by coming into the garden to seek him when he was lost, and to clothe the shame of his nakedness. The Father sent the pre-incarnate Son of God into the garden to seek Adam and Eve and to find them.

This was He who came “walking in the garden in the cool of the day,” and saying, “Adam, where are you?” But, I am saying, that that event early on, was not the fullness of time that is talked about in our text. Adam was given a promise at that time, and perhaps the greatest of all promises, in the world, at that time before the Flood. When God addressed the Serpent with words of judgment and prophecy, He said, “And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; and He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.” But in the giving of this promise of Christ's coming, God was not indicating that that was the right time for the promise to be fulfilled.

No, in God's Holy mind it was necessary that there should be a certain period of time that would go by; quite a bit of time actually, between the giving of the promise and the fulfillment of it in the Savior. The Son of God, the 2nd Person of the Divine Trinity, would not assume human nature or take upon Himself human flesh for four thousand years yet. And so, that long time period of waiting was spoken of in terms of all the people that lived before Jesus Christ's 1st coming. It was spoken of as a time of “bondage under the elemental things of the world.” God would have all men to understand that only His Son could save them from the consequences of Adam sin. Adam was our representative head.

And so, God would have all men to see also what they had done to themselves, as people who every day confirm Adam's sin by their own sins. Not one of Adam's race can save themselves from the bondage of sin. Probably you remember, that back there in the garden, Adam was hiding from God. He was not seeking for God after he ate the forbidden fruit. And so, God would need to order all things Himself, in regard to his salvation. And He would have to order all things as well, for the whole human race coming after him. He would have to show all of mankind that He alone could provide salvation. He would have to show them that He alone

could bring them salvation. He would reveal His great salvation at the right time, by His bringing it about in such a way that it would show the preciousness of it to all mankind. He would put His ancient people, the Jews, through a waiting period of thousands of years. He would do this, knowing that He would eventually give them the full inheritance of what His Son would purchase. But in that waiting time He would reveal certain aspects of this great salvation in such a way, that it would make them feel, it would cause them to understand, that sin in every person and in every generation is a very evil thing.

One example in the history of Israel will help in this regard. And that was God's sending Jonah to preach to the Ninevites that they should repent. Jonah did not want to go and preach to them for he knew what that people had done to the Jewish people in recent battles. It was so bad, that Jonah couldn't get over it; until that is, God appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah, and take him down to the bottom of the sea alive. There, Jonah found that God was merciful to him, and after 3 days and 3 nights in the belly of the fish, he repented, and God brought him out of that watery grave. Then he finally did go and preach to Ninevah.

The Lord Jesus Himself used that true story to speak to the religious leaders of Israel in His day, of His coming death and resurrection. He said in Matthew 12: 40 and 41 – “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.” Jonah was meant to be a great sign to the people of Israel in Jesus' day, that He was a prophet sent to them by God. For he would die and be buried and be three days and three nights in the belly of the fish, and then be resurrected from the dead. But many of them still did not believe.

Jesus gave them this sign because He knew that they were very much like Jonah; reluctant to believe in everything God said concerning repentance and preaching: preaching that unless they repented, they would be judged by God. Let us understand then, that all men are in bondage to the elemental things of this world in the way that they think about what God does. By nature and practice they are blind in their understanding, unless God comes and grants them release and sight, through their believing in His Son. It is only then that they can freely, willingly, and lovingly, serve God in the way that He desires. But because God sent His Son into the world, these things can be granted to a person, by faith in what Christ has done. He has gone down to the bottom of the sea, as it were, for us; for all those people who will trust in Him alone.

2nd – When God sent forth His Son the power of the Jewish nation was dwindling.
(verse 4)

“When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those born under the law.” It was the fullness of time when the ruling power of the Jewish nation was dwindling. Their kings ruling in righteousness, their witness for God as the one people that He had chosen in all the earth to be His people; the wisdom and power of their being a godly people as a nation, at the time of Christ's appearing, was greatly diminished. They needed very much for Him to come to them, even as it says in Genesis 49: 10. “The scepter shall not depart from Judah nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh comes; and to Him shall be the obedience of the people.”

He would come when the ruling leaders of the tribe of Judah were greatly corrupted and there were very few of them. But He would be a King in perfect righteousness and judgment. John Gill says that the name “Shiloh comes from a root which signifies to be “quiet”, “peaceable”, and “prosperous”; as he was of a quiet and peaceable disposition, came to make peace between God and men, and made it by the blood of his cross, and gives spiritual peace to all his followers, and brings them at length to everlasting peace and happiness; having prospered and succeeded in the great work of their redemption and salvation he undertook.”

In Isaiah 61: 1-3, the Lord Jesus prophetically said – “The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon Me, Because the LORD has anointed Me to preach good tidings to the poor; He has sent Me to

heal the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to those who are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn, to console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.”

When Jesus came to Israel and fulfilled these verses we see that after He came, things changed very drastically for the Jews. But not only for them, but also for the whole world. It was the dawning of a new day because of Christ! It is called a New “Year” here. It is “the acceptable year of the Lord.” God was not just going to deal with men through the witness of creation to Himself. And He is not going to confine Himself to having the Jewish nation be His only chosen people. Since He sent Christ forth, He is commanding all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel.

So, let us see, that God was Holy and Wise for waiting for thousands of years to send His Son, but He was also Holy and Wise in sending Him at the very time that He did. He sent Him when the religions devised by the wisdom and art of the World were taking over the world. But in sending His Son He was saying – I will not let them completely take over. It is time for the World to know. I will turn the world upside down by the sending of My Son. Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Darkness is threatening to overcome the world, but now I give you Christ, the light of the world. He will shine in the darkness and the darkness will not overcome Him. (John 1: 5)

3rd – When God sent forth His Son, it was the time to receive the adoption as sons.

It says in verse 5 that He sent Him forth “to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.” So this statement takes us a step farther yet in terms of what Christ was sent forth from God for. We have seen that the law with all of its ceremonies and ordinances could not bring men to God. It could only bring men into bondage unless they could see Christ in all of the types and sacrifices which the law required them to make. By faith, in Old Testament times, Christ was to be seen in God’s redeeming Israel from their bondage in Egypt. He was seen in the sprinkling of the blood on the door-posts and lintels so that the firstborn of Israel would not die. But all of the firstborn of the Egyptians did die, because the blood of the typical sacrifice was not applied to their doorposts.

The Passover Lamb being slain and eaten on that night pointed to the death of Christ for sinners. It was God’s mercy revealed to those who were partakers of grace through faith. This was the way that God was to be served because this is how God redeemed those people as a nation to Himself. Their individual salvation, however was not to be found in the observance of external ordinances. It was to be found by faith in what God had revealed of Christ to them through those ordinances. So, all those who were under the law had to be redeemed from under the law, that they might receive the adoption as sons. They had to be able to see that Christ was the “end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes. (Romans 10: 4)

This meant that without Christ’s saving grace, all the ordinances of the Mosaic law which they observed outwardly, would not necessarily lead to favor, acceptance, righteousness, or becoming adopted full-grown sons who would have all the privileges of being adopted, accorded to them. But this is why Christ was sent forth, this is how each one of us is bought back from the kind of thinking that I am describing here and which we all are prone to. It is the kind of thinking that says that if we have been baptized, if we go to church, if we are diligent in the observance of all the ceremonies and sacraments and ordinances of our own particular religion that we will be saved.

But it shall never stand in the sight of God, either in this life or in the judgment that is coming. So Christ was born of a woman, that is the Virgin Mary’s flesh and blood. And He was born under the law, that is the Mosaic law, because man’s perfect and complete obedience was

the issue. He was sent forth at the very time of God's choosing, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. This applies to both believing Jews and Gentiles. Jesus Christ came to fulfill the law so that not only Gentiles would not have to be under it, but also that all Jews could be redeemed from it as well. The ordinances and ceremonies were a great obstacle in the people's truly coming to experience what is termed here, "the adoption as sons."

It was not as though they did not have promises of forgiveness, or the reality of God's blessings of God grace and help coming to them in accordance with what was written in the books of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms about Christ. If they believed those promises, they were saved! But all that was laid out in the law of Moses did not of itself bring to them the privileges of a being a full grown spiritual son of God. It would take Christ's coming to do that. The observance of the law had its privileges, but they were burdensome privileges, a yoke so to speak. They hemmed the soul of the person in, in their trying to perform everything that was written and required of them in God's holy law.

Take Leviticus 18: 4, 5. "You shall observe My judgments and keep My ordinances, to walk in them: I am the Lord your God. You shall therefore keep My statutes and My judgments, which if a man does, he shall live by them: I am the Lord." It is not as though these were not good commandments worthy to be observed. It was just that the hearts of men were not spiritually strong enough to keep them. By nature they did not have the joy and delight in keeping them that would glorify God. They could not love God with all their heart, mind, soul, and strength, in keeping them as they should. To be able to do that, it would take Christ's coming to fulfill the law. It would take Christ's grace coming to them, and to us also, to give us a right spirit, and not a legal spirit, in our obedience to God. But this is exactly why God sent Him forth.

4th – When God sent forth His Son, it was so that, in time, He could send forth the Spirit. (verse 6)

"And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, 'Abba, Father!'" "Therefore you are no longer a slave but a sons, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." So, we who believe are no longer a slave to the whole Mosaic system; we are no longer in bondage to the elements of the world, the principle that ordinances and ceremonies are going to point us on to how we could be in right relation to God. Something a thousand times more wonderful has happened to us who have received the adoption as sons. God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts.

What a great description of our salvation. It is a description of everything that we have we have received. We receive the adoption as sons because of the work of Christ in fulfilling the law and dying for our sins. God sends the Spirit of His Son, who enters our heart and gives us an understanding of His will. He teaches us to live by faith. The Spirit moves us to pray and to cry out to God that He would help us to do that which is pleasing to Him. It is God's Spirit who gives us this grace and wisdom on how we should keep God's commandments.

The timing of His coming to us so that we know Him; His help, and comfort, and strength, is when we believe. But when we believe, we come to realize that the Spirit's work in us began before we believed; and thereby we come to understand that now we have received the adoption and are sons of God. All of this, because of Christ. Please remember, whether you are contemplating the gospel for the first time, or whether you have walked with the Lord for many years, that God's timing is perfect in everything. He brings all the blessings of this great salvation in Christ in their right order and time. The Father and the Son send the Spirit to your heart. He is the One who comforts you and teaches you all that you need to learn about living for Christ.

