

4. a) How is the concept of sonship in the bible different from our ideas of sonship in today's society? What is the main emphasis in Paul using this imagery of sonship in our standing before God? (Look at 1 John 3:10 for clues).

b) How has the modern church often misunderstood sonship with the focus on believers' authority, word of faith, and an over-emphasized focus on spiritual gifts?

5. a) What is the difference between a son and a slave? How does this difference influence the way we perceive ourselves and more importantly the way we live? How is the dangerous concept of legalism further explained by the imagery of slavery as opposed to sonship?

b) Reflection Question. Please share experiences where we are tempted to act as slaves rather than sons.

Case Study

1. Jenny Loo had come from a religious background being a Buddhist all her life before coming to faith in Christ in her teens. She came to Christ at a rally in her Christian fellowship in school when she was convicted of her eternal damnation because of her sin. She diligently did her quiet time every single day, attended church and her bible study group, and even regularly helped out at a local soup kitchen. She was picked to be a youth leader in her church and ran the fellowship very well as she had great administrative and social skills. She met and fell in love with her college mate who unfortunately was not a believer soon her usual spiritual routine fell apart and she neglected her quiet time, quit her leadership position and even her church attendance was rare. She found great joy in her newfound boyfriend who introduced her to a whole new world outside religion. Deep inside she struggled with guilt as her old fears of eternal damnation resurfaced. She could not confess her sin because she was not ready to repent. She redoubled her efforts at the soup kitchen, forced herself to read the bible more, and even tried to evangelize her boyfriend. Her friends at church reached out to her to try to restore her but she rejected them and in the end, married her boyfriend when they were 20 years of age. Years later, the same church friends convinced her to go to Alpha and she went to hear the gospel and went back to church.
 - a. What do you think is the fundamental problem here? Is Jenny acting as a son of God or a slave? What is the evidence?
 - b. What is the source of Jenny's guilt? What is the basis of her spiritual standing? Is it in Christ or her performance?
 - c. If you were Jenny's friend how would you counsel her?
 - d. Some of Jenny's friends in church nominated her for a church leadership position again after some months but the leaders noted her history and non-Christian spouse and insisted that this would only be possible if her husband became a Christian. What do you think about the merits or biblical basis of such a condition?

Takeaway

Paul teaches in Galatians 4:1-7 that believers, both Jews and Gentiles, are no longer under the guardianship of the Law but are fully adopted as God's children through Christ, with the privilege of calling Him "Abba, Father." This adoption breaks all barriers of ethnicity, gender, and status, giving believers a new identity, inheritance, and mission to share the gospel with others.