

# Membership Covenant

The 5 G's  
Groups  
Giving  
Gifts  
Grace  
Growth

## A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: Galatians 3:23-4:7

Message for the Week: Child of God

Sunday, October 29

### Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What are you hoping to inherit someday?

### Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

### Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [Galatians 3:23 - 4:7](#) out loud.

(Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.)

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

## Respond / Reflect:

What does it look like to be "locked up" or "held in custody" by the law?

Are you/we still allowing ourselves to be "locked up" or "held in custody" by the law? Why or why not?

What does it take to be set free from the bondage and custody of the law? What practices do we engage in to try and set us free? Are they working?

You are adopted by Jesus Christ! Are you embracing or fighting your adoption?

What is an heir? What does it mean to be an "heir according to the promise?"

Why is there such a lack of contentment in Western society?

## Try It:

Each day this week, say these truths about who you are in Jesus Christ: I am adopted. I am chosen. I am loved. I am forgiven. I am set free. I am an heir of God's promise. I am a child of the King.

## Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father help me/us to see and experience the freedom I/we have in Christ Jesus. Forgive me/us for trying to find that freedom elsewhere, besides Christ alone. Lead me/us in a deeper relationship with you to live out my/our belonging to you for the sake of your glory and honor. AMEN

## Missional/Spiritual Practice: Groups

I commit to being an active participant in Covenant's faith community through corporate worship and ministry involvement. Are you an active participant in these?

I commit to being involved in a small group, prayer group, and/or a ministry group to encourage others in their spiritual life and to be held accountable for mine.

Are you involved in a ministry group? If not, which ministry group will you join?

## New International Version

<sup>23</sup> Before the coming of this faith,<sup>[a]</sup> we were held in custody under the law, locked up until the faith that was to come would be revealed. <sup>24</sup> So the law was our guardian until Christ came that we might be justified by faith. <sup>25</sup> Now that this faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian.

<sup>26</sup> So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, <sup>27</sup> for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. <sup>28</sup> There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup> If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

<sup>4</sup> What I am saying is that as long as an heir is underage, he is no different from a slave, although he owns the whole estate. <sup>2</sup> The heir is subject to guardians and trustees until the time set by his father. <sup>3</sup> So also, when we were underage, we were in slavery under the elemental spiritual forces<sup>[b]</sup> of the world. <sup>4</sup> But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman, born under the law, <sup>5</sup> to redeem those under the law, that we might receive adoption to sonship.<sup>[c]</sup> <sup>6</sup> Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, "Abba,<sup>[d]</sup> Father." <sup>7</sup> So you are no longer a slave, but God's child; and since you are his child, God has made you also an heir.

## The Message

<sup>23-24</sup> Until the time when we were mature enough to respond freely in faith to the living God, we were carefully surrounded and protected by the Mosaic law. The law was like those Greek tutors, with which you are familiar, who escort children to school and protect them from danger or distraction, making sure the children will really get to the place they set out for.

<sup>25-27</sup> But now you have arrived at your destination: By faith in Christ you are in direct relationship with God. Your baptism in Christ was not just washing you up for a fresh start. It also involved dressing you in an adult faith wardrobe—Christ's life, the fulfillment of God's original promise.

### In Christ's Family

<sup>28-29</sup> In Christ's family there can be no division into Jew and non-Jew, slave and free, male and female. Among us you are all equal. That is, we are all in a common relationship with Jesus Christ. Also, since you are Christ's family, then you are Abraham's famous "descendant," heirs according to the covenant promises.

<sup>4</sup> <sup>1-3</sup> Let me show you the implications of this. As long as the heir is a minor, he has no advantage over the slave. Though legally he owns the entire inheritance, he is subject to tutors and administrators until whatever date the father has set for emancipation. That is the way it is with us: When we were minors, we were just like slaves ordered around by simple instructions (the tutors and administrators of this world), with no say in the conduct of our own lives.

<sup>4-7</sup> But when the time arrived that was set by God the Father, God sent his Son, born among us of a woman, born under the conditions of the law so that he might redeem those of us who have been kidnapped by the law. Thus we have been set free to experience our rightful heritage. You can tell for sure that you are now fully adopted as his own children because God sent the Spirit of his Son into our lives crying out, "Papa! Father!" Doesn't that privilege of intimate conversation with God make it plain that you are not a slave, but a child? And if you are a child, you're also an heir, with complete access to the inheritance.