

THD-011 and 012
Resuming our Galatians
2002 Study....

“Blessed [happy] are they that hear the word of God, and keep it.” (Luke 11:28)

Yes, that's right, we are back in Galatians, picking up where we left off in Galatians chapter 3, which we will introduce with our text for today from Galatians chapter 4 verse 15:

Where then is that happy condition of yours?
- (Bible in Basic English)

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Rom. 11:6, *"But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works, otherwise grace is no longer grace."*

Gal. 2:21, *"I do not nullify the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the Law, then Christ died needlessly."*

Gal. 3:24, "Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.'

John 3:16, "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10

Peter 1:2-3 Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that [pertain] unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue...

Happiness - Divine Viewpoint

I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. John 10:10

The word abundantly is the Greek word *perissos* and it means superabundant in quantity and superior in quality.

Happiness - Divine Viewpoint

“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.” – John 15:9-11 ESV

Galatians 4:15
What has happened to all your joy?

Let's look back from Chapter 4 verse 15 to see if we
can learn just where their "Joy went."
Let's back it up to where we left off in our study of
Galatians back in 2002:
Galatians 3:1
You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you,

First, let us look at the word for "joy", here, in Galatians 4:15.

It is the word μακάριος:

The special feature of the group μακάριος, μακαρίζειν, μακαρισμός in the NT is that it refers overwhelmingly to the distinctive religious joy which accrues to man from his share in the salvation of the kingdom of God.

Thus the verb μακαρίζειν, which occurs only twice in the NT, is used in Lk. 1:48 of the blessing of the mother of the Messiah by all generations (Lk. 11:27), and in Jm. 5:11 of the righteous who endure (ὑπομείναντας).

The noun μακαρισμός is found only 3 times, at Gl. 4:15 for the blessedness of receiving the message of salvation, and at R. 4:6, 9 with reference to the remission of sins.

In both passages it is used almost technically by Paul.

μακάριος is very common in the NT, and it is used almost always in direct beatitudes.⁴⁰

As in the Gk. world and the OT the reference is to persons.

The formula often found in the Gk. world and also in the LXX, on the basis of the Heb. namely μακάριος ὅς (τις), is seldom found in the NT (only Mt. 11:6 and par.; Lk. 14:15). This is a sign of the independence of the NT beatitudes as compared with the surrounding world.⁴² The NT, like the LXX in many cases, prefers a predicative μακάριος first, then the person with art. (cf. Mt. 5:3 ff.; Rev. 1:3; 14:13 etc.), and finally the reason for the blessedness, or a description of it, in a subsidiary clause (ὅτι Mt. 5:3 ff.; Lk. 1:45 etc.). As distinct from those of the OT, they are not part of practical wisdom but come in the context of eschatological proclamation.⁴⁴ For this reason they occur for the most part in the Synpt. and Rev. In keeping with the tension into which the dawn of the age of salvation sets the soul, the NT beatitudes have great emotional force (Mt. 13:16; Rev. 19:9).

As in Gk. macarisms, there is often contrast with a false estimation as to who is truly blessed (Mt. 5:3–6, 10 f.; Lk. 11:28; Jn. 20:29; 1 Pt. 3:14; 4:14).

A clear difference from the Gk. beatitudes is that all secular goods and values are now completely subsidiary to the one supreme good, the kingdom of God, whether it be that the righteous man may hope for this, is certain of it, has a title to it, or already has a part in it.

The predominating estimation of the kingdom of God carries with it a reversal of all customary evaluations.

Thus the NT beatitudes often contain sacred paradoxes (Mt. 5:3 ff.; Lk. 6:20–22; 1 Pt. 3:14; 4:14; Rev. 14:13). This is particularly true of the striking beatitudes which obviously formed the introduction to the Sermon on the Mount in the very earliest tradition.⁴⁵ In the impressive form of beatitudes basic statements are here made about those who may regard themselves as citizens of the kingdom of God. The power of the statements lies in their reversal of all human values.

In Lk. the beatitudes consist more of eschatological consolation. Men in certain circumstances, the poor, the hungry, the weeping, the hated, are promised the blessings of the kingdom of God. In Mt. the factor of their own moral and religious conduct is more prominent, and the connection between right conduct and heavenly recompense is emphasised.⁴⁶ There is in fact no material distinction between the two forms, for even the partially earlier form in Lk. includes righteousness on the part of those who are called blessed.

The blessing of Jesus is for pious aniyim,⁴⁷ who are depicted partly as humble and oppressed (→ πτωχοί, Lk. 6:20; Mt. 5:3 + τῷ πνεύματι; cf. Lk. 1:52f.; Ps. 10:2; 14:6; 18:27), partly as those who are filled with longing (πεινῶντες, Lk. 6:21; Mt. 5:6 + καὶ διψῶντες τὴν δικαιοσύνην, cf. Is. 55:1), partly as those who are much disturbed, whether at the poor state of the world or at their own imperfection (Lk. 6:21 κλαίοντες, Mt. 5:4 πενθοῦντες, cf. Is. 61:2 f.).

The self-conscious and impenitent rich, and the proud and self-righteous models of piety, are their antithesis, Lk. 18:9.

The beatitudes in Mt. which are additional to those of Lk. mention also men whose mind corresponds in content to the higher law of the kingdom of God: ἐλεήμονες, v. 7; καθαροὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ, v. 8; εἰρηνοποιοί, v. 9.

Here, too, there is to some degree a contrast with the attitude of the righteous among the Jews. What counts before God is simple pity (Mt. 25:31 ff.) rather than cold knowledge of the Law, purity of heart (Ps. 24:4) rather than self-righteous external purity (Mt. 23:26), unselfish readiness to assist the cause of peace.

The final beatitude in the 2nd person⁴⁸ refers the disciples paradoxically to the blessing of being listed among the most honoured of the prophets as a result of persecution.

As they remain steadfast in martyrdom they can be sure of the divine reward.

The blessing extends also to those who, in distinction from the unsatisfied longing of the upright in days past, may now experience the coming of the kingdom of God (Mt. 13:16 f. and par.).⁴⁹

It applies also to those who meet the decisive revelation of God with genuine faith (Lk. 1:45; Mt. 16:17); hence also to those who accept the revelation of God without cavil (Mt. 11:6 and par.) and make no false demands upon it (Jn. 20:29); and to those, too, who bring the true presupposition of faith in readiness to hear the Word of God (Lk. 11:28).

As Jesus sets before men the terrible twofold destiny of judgment or salvation, He blesses those who will find a divine reward by steadfast watchfulness (Lk. 12:37 f.; Rev. 16:15), fidelity (Mt. 24:46; Lk. 12:43), or the general fulfilling of Christian requirements (Lk. 14:14; Jn. 13:17).

Similarly, those who stand fast are called blessed in Jm, 1:12, for their earthly endurance brings them eternal salvation.

The thought of a sure reward is also present when the righteous doer is called blessed in Jm. 1:25.

In all these verses the light of future glory shines over the sorry present position of the righteous.

Thus the NT beatitudes are not just intimations of the future or consolations in relation to it.

They see the present in the light of the future.

As the Gk. world often blesses the one who escapes serious misfortune, so women who are unfortunate enough to be childless are called blessed under the threat of impending judgment on Jerusalem (Lk. 23:29).

The honour of a woman is most enhanced by great sons, and for this reason the mother of the Messiah' is called blessed (Lk. 11:27).

While there are many beatitudes in the Synoptists, there are hardly any in Paul, nor do Pauline beatitudes have a specific gnomic form. Yet the few Paul has are theologically important. The twofold macarism which he takes from the OT (Ps. 32:1 f.) in R. 4:7 f. calls the man blessed who enjoys remission of sins. This is the blessing of salvation in special measure. In R. 14:22 Paul calls blessed the man who in his decisions on disputed ethical matters has no reason for self-reproach. In a comparison he calls the unmarried blessed because they are spared worldly θλίψις and can give themselves more wholeheartedly to the Lord, 1 C. 7:40.

Finally, beatitudes figure strongly in Rev.

There are 7 ... and they have a pronounced gnomic form, and are full of the whole tension which the time just before the end implies for the community.

Five of them—and this enhances their force—are from heavenly lips.

They thus speak with supreme and indisputable authority (14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 22:7, 14).

The whole book stands in the framework of the blessing of those who attain to and keep the blessed revelation of the mysteries of God (1:3 confirmed in 22:7).

In 14:13 the witnesses of Christ who will find martyrdom ὅπ' ἄρτι, i.e., from the beginning of the final struggle against the community, are called blessed. Their work, which accompanies the soul to judgment (4 Esr. 7:35), and which in this case is endurance even to death, will receive from God an everlasting reward.⁵¹

Also blessed is the faithful Christian who perseveres in watching and in keeping himself during his time on earth (16:15), esteeming the heavenly promise more highly than all the attractions and apparent treasures of the world.

Blessed, too, are those whom God invites to the consummation (19:9).

Blessed are those who take part in the first resurrection, and who thus escape final death (20:6).

The final macarism is a judicial sentence. In contrast to the wicked who are excluded, it blesses those who in full holiness (forgiveness) and sanctification are counted worthy to enter into the eternal city.

2. The purely secular concept of counting someone blessed is found in Ac. 26:2.

3. In the Past. μακάριος is used in a more Gk. and Hellenistic sense (→ 362) to describe the blessed transcendence of God above earthly suffering and corruptibility, 1 Tm. 1:11; 6:15.⁵²

There is a non-personal use of μακάριος in Tt. 2:13 with reference to Christian hope, which belongs to the sphere of the incorruptible and blessed God.⁵³

-- Hauck

Makarios Review:

IN STUDYING BIBLE HAPPINESS WE ARE
FORCED TO CONFRONT A VERY COMMON
ERROR THAT HAS LED TO SO MUCH
CONFUSION AND FALSE DOCTRINE:

The Beatitudes -
A mostly bad example of Biblical Interpretation
How to Be Happy
Matthew 5:1–12

Introduction:

New Testament Christianity is demanding. It calls for changed lives, but we seem to be lacking in a crucial area—joy and happiness.

Let us look at what we want so badly but of which we have so little.

I. The Focus of Happiness

A. Understanding its meaning

1. It is not fun, pleasure, physical gratification, security, etc.
2. It is deep peace, an underlying state of satisfaction, an attitude of life, a state of being in harmony with life and at peace with God

B. Tracing its sources

1. Not found in the world, in doing one's own thing, in freedom or independence, in entertainment, or in constant activity
2. Found in a very specific place

II. The Facts of Happiness

(“Blessed” really means “happy”, so passage describes a happy man)

- A. Joy begins when the journey begins; happiness not reserved for the future
- B. Happiness depends on the traveler, not on the journey
- C. Happiness comes not by passive waiting, but by active participation
- D. Happiness is endless, because it extends beyond life
- E. Pursuit of happiness—in the right way—is a Christian’s duty
- F. Happiness does not come through all the things which obviously cannot produce it

III. The Fount of Happiness

(True happiness is only found in following a biblical pattern)

- A. Godly living comes through obedience
- B. Christlikeness
- C. Accepting God's will
- D. Trusting what God gives
- E. Getting eyes off self and on to others

Conclusion:

Are you happy? As happy as you should be? If not, it is almost certain two things are needful. Some area(s) of disobedience must be cleared up. Need to get focus off self and on to others.

The Beatitudes - "The Happinesses"

2 And he opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

4 "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

6 "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

7 "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.

8 "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

10 "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. **12** Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for so they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:3-11

J. B. Phillips, in his book *When God Was Man* (Nashville: Abington, 1955), gives this version of the Beatitudes:

Happy are the [pushy people], for they get on in the world.

Happy are the hard-boiled, for they never let life hurt them.

Happy are they who complain, for they get their own way in the end.

Happy are the blase, for they never worry over their sins.

Happy are the slave drivers, for they get results.

Happy are the knowledgeable men of the world, for they know their way around.

Happy are the troublemakers, for they make people take notice of them.

The Beatitudes

Jesus starts by telling his disciples how to be happy. His list of eight happy attitudes turns popular values upside down (5:3–12).

Most people assume happiness is:

- ◆ achieving our goals of wealth and success; leaving others behind.
- ◆ always being fun to have around — the life and soul of every party.
- ◆ being strong, or beautiful, or rich, or clever; being independent, secure and in control.
- ◆ getting our terms agreed, our rights established and ensuring that justice is done.

To our shame, we also find happiness in:

- ◆ taking revenge on our enemies.
- ◆ indulging our greed and lust.
- ◆ picking fights and winning arguments.
- ◆ and (better still) avoiding all trouble or misfortune!

Jesus' conditions for a happy life are exactly the opposite.

He says the poor in spirit are happy, because they depend completely on God — which is heaven on earth.

He says those who mourn are happy, because God shares their heartbreak and will surely comfort them.

The meek have a special happiness because they are free of pride and ambition; God will give them the world.

Those who hunger and thirst for goodness are happy, because God himself will satisfy their longings.

Those who show mercy are happy, because they in turn will be treated kindly.

The pure in heart are happy, because they will meet God face to face.

Those who make peace are happy, because they take after God and do his work.

Those who are persecuted for doing good are happy, because they share the real cost of God's kingdom.

Do you hear anything in here about "Faith in Christ?"
Is this the Gospel?

To whom is this directed?

Let's look at a previous slide for our clue...

Finally, beatitudes figure strongly in **Rev.**

There are 7 ... and they have a pronounced gnomic form, and are full of the whole tension which the time just before the end implies for the community.

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So, if we find the Beatitudes (the makarisms) in the Synoptics and in the Revelation, that should give us some idea of their nature and explain why we do not find them accompanied by the Gospel as proclaimed throughout the Epistles.

First, what did Jesus come to proclaim to the Jews?

Second, what is the book of Revelation about?

Matthew 3:2 encapsulizes John's "Elijah Message":

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17 records that *"Jesus began to preach and say, 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.'"*

It is evident that Jesus explicitly adopted John's message as his own. Matthew 4:23 also states that Jesus *"went throughout Galilee . . . preaching the good news of the kingdom."*

Here is a brief description of the doctrine By: Matthew Allen:

"Dispensationalists thus believe that the kingdom promised in the Old Testament (what I call the eschatological kingdom) will be established in the millennium at which time Israel will be converted and Jesus will sit on David's throne. Both inauguration and consummation of the kingdom are future in orientation.

Revised dispensationalists have been particularly vigorous in proposing that the entirety of the eschatological kingdom of God will come in the future, as Jesus returns and ushers in the millennium. Charles Ryrie has emphatically declared that the kingdom is not the church, the body of Christ.¹⁷ Rather, the kingdom is future:

What would those people [the Jews of Jesus's day] have understood the kingdom to be? The Messianic, Davidic kingdom on this earth in which the Jewish people would have a prominent place.¹⁸

The kingdom is "physical, glorious and powerful."¹⁹

The gospel of Matthew factors prominently in the revised dispensational scheme of the kingdom. As Walvoord stated in his commentary on Matthew, the very purpose of the first gospel is to "explain[] why the prophecies relating to the kingdom of Christ on earth are delayed in fulfillment until the second coming."²⁰ It "was designed to explain to the Jews, who had expected the Messiah when He came to be a conquering king, why instead Christ suffered and died, and why there was the resulting postponement of His triumph to His second coming."²¹

Remember, Galatians 4:15?

15 Where then is that sense of blessing you had?

You were so happy! What has happened? is literally “Where is your happiness?” or “... your blessedness?” The question is rhetorical and implies that when Paul was asking the question the Galatians no longer felt the same way they did when he was with them.

This is made clear in *TEV* and other modern translations (*RSV* “what has become of the satisfaction you felt?”; *JB* “what has become of this enthusiasm you had?”; *NAB* “what has happened to your openhearted spirit?”).

It is possible to interpret the happiness of the Galatians as related either to Paul's presence with them (*NEB* "have you forgotten how happy you thought yourselves in having me with you?") or to his teaching. However, it may be enough to take the question as a general statement describing the condition of the Galatians at that time.

A literal translation of *You were so happy!* might be interpreted as merely a description of the Galatians' normal personality, that is, that they were essentially happy people.

Obviously, however, Paul is referring to the particular experience which made them happy, for example, “What happened to you made you so happy,” “Because of your experience, you were so happy,” or “As a result of what had happened, you were so happy.” Thus it may be necessary to render *What has happened?* as “What has happened now?” or even “What has happened to change all this?”

Verse fifteen. The word blessedness is from makarios (μακαριος) which in secular Greek means prosperous, and which indicates that the makarios (μακαριος) person is in a state of prosperity. He asks, Where is that prosperous condition now?

Translation. Where is therefore your (spiritually) prosperous state? - WUEST

So, let us return to Galatians 3:1 to see why they have lost their Happiness (makarios), since we know it was not from a lack of "Be-Attitude"

1 You foolish Galatians, who has bewitched you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?

Thus, we can see that the Beatitudes are not the prescription for the Christian Life (what are often taught as the "Be-Attitudes"), but are the Laws of the Tribulation for the Jews.

Now that we have dispensed with that little source of Legalism in the Church, we will return to Galatians

The tone of the whole verse—and of the whole section, for that matter—is one of unbelief. It is unthinkable to Paul that the Galatians have changed so quickly. The only explanation possible is that they have gone out of their minds!

Foolish (*NAB* “senseless,” *NEB* “stupid,” *JB* “mad”) puts the emphasis not on natural stupidity but on failure to use one’s mental and spiritual powers.

A vocative expression such as *You foolish Galatians!* may be both grammatically awkward and misleading in sense. It might mean, for example, that all the people in Galatia were stupid, which, of course, is not what Paul means. He is addressing particular Galatians and he is saying that they are “not using their heads” or “not thinking right.”

It may be necessary, therefore, to say in some languages “You Galatians are not thinking right,” or “... not using your minds as you should.” In some languages the meaning of *foolish* is expressed idiomatically, for example, “you have lost your heads,” “your minds have left you,” or “your heads are empty.”

Who put a spell on you? (literally, “who has bewitched you?”) is a rhetorical question, and the “who” probably refers to the same [Judaizers] spoken of in 1:7. The emphasis here, however, is not on who did the bewitching, but on the fact that the Galatians are indeed bewitched (*NEB* “You must have been bewitched”). The word “bewitched” itself suggests the use of magic, particularly the casting of a spell through the use of the evil eye. The belief that one person could cast a spell over another is common in many parts of the world, but one must not deduce from this statement that Paul believed in magic. He is more likely using “bewitched” in a metaphorical sense, and he probably means by it “to pervert,” “to lead astray,” or “to confuse the mind.”

Before your very eyes is a part of a dependent clause in the Greek, and while most translations retain the original form, *TEV* makes the clause into a separate sentence. The whole expression is metaphorical and describes the familiar practice of making public announcements by means of bills or posters. In this case the announcement is “the death of Jesus Christ on the cross.”

The final sentence in this verse is related to the preceding as a reason for Paul’s having concluded that the Galatians had been bewitched.

It may be important in some languages to indicate this connection by rendering the final sentence as “How could this have happened, since before your very eyes you had a clear description ...?”

It may, however, be quite difficult to employ a more or less literal translation of this final sentence in verse 1, for it is rare that one can speak of “having a clear description.” Since it was Paul himself who had described the death of Jesus Christ, it may be better to say “since I described to you so clearly how Jesus Christ died on the cross.”

2 This is the only thing I want to find out from you: did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh?

Happiness - Divine Viewpoint

2 Peter 1:3 His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence, 4 by which he has granted to us his precious and very great promises, so that through them you may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world because of sinful desire.

*For the law of the **Spirit of life** in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death. {3} For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God did by sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, on account of sin: He condemned sin in the flesh, {4} that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us who do not walk according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.
(Romans 8:2-4 NKJV)*

4 Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain?

5 So then, does He who provides you with the Spirit and works miracles among you, do it by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?

6 Even so Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness.

7 Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham.

8 The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, *saying*, “All the nations will be blessed in you.”

9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.

10 For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.”

11 Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, “The righteous man shall live by faith.” [Remember hearing that before?]

12 However, the Law is not of faith; on the contrary, “He who practices them shall live by them.”

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us—for it is written, “Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree”—

14 in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

15 Brethren, I speak in terms of human relations: even though it is *only* a man's covenant, yet when it has been ratified, no one sets it aside or adds conditions to it.

16 Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, "And to seeds," as *referring* to many, but *rather* to one, "And to your seed," that is, Christ.

17 What I am saying is this: the Law, which came four hundred and thirty years later, does not invalidate a covenant previously ratified by God, so as to nullify the promise.

18 For if the inheritance is based on law, it is no longer based on a promise; but God has granted it to Abraham by means of a promise.

19 Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.

20 Now a mediator is not for one *party only*; whereas God is *only* one.

21 Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based on law.

22 But the Scripture has shut up everyone under sin, so that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

23 But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

24 Therefore the Law has become our tutor *to lead us* to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.

25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's descendants, heirs according to promise.

Chapter 4
Sonship in Christ

1 Now I say, as long as the heir is a child, he does not differ at all from a slave although he is owner of everything,

2 but he is under guardians and managers until the date set by the father.

3 So also we, while we were children, were held in bondage under the elemental things of the world.

4 But when the fullness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law,
5 so that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.
6 Because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, “Abba! Father!”

7 Therefore you are no longer a slave, but a son; and if a son, then an heir through God.

8 However at that time, when you did not know God, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods.

9 But now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how is it that you turn back again to the weak and worthless elemental things, to which you desire to be enslaved all over again?

10 You observe days and months and seasons and years.

11 I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain.

12 I beg of you, brethren, become as I *am*, for I also *have become as you are*. You have done me no wrong;

13 but you know that it was because of a bodily illness that I preached the gospel to you the first time;

14 and that which was a trial to you in my bodily condition you did not despise or loathe, but you received me as an angel [messenger] of God, as Christ Jesus *Himself*.

15 Where then is that sense of blessing you had? For I bear you witness that, if possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me.

16 So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth?

17 They eagerly seek you, not commendably, but they wish to shut you out so that you will seek them.

18 But it is good always to be eagerly sought in a commendable manner, and not only when I am present with you.

19 My children, with whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you—

20 but I could wish to be present with you now and to change my tone, for I am perplexed about you.

21 Tell me, you who want to be under law, do you not listen to the law?

22 For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman and one by the free woman.

23 But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise.

24 This is allegorically speaking, for these *women* are two covenants: one *proceeding* from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar.

25 Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia and corresponds to the present Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children.

26 But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother.

27 For it is written,
“Rejoice, barren woman who does not bear;
Break forth and shout, you who are not in labor;
For more numerous are the children of the desolate
Than of the one who has a husband.”

28 And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of
promise.

29 But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him *who was born* according to the Spirit, so it is now also.

30 But what does the Scripture say?
“Cast out the bondwoman and her son,
For the son of the bondwoman shall not be an heir with
the son of the free woman.”

31 So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman.

When we take our children to the shrine of the Golden Arches, they always lust for the meal that comes with a cheap little prize, a combination christened, in a moment of marketing genius, the Happy Meal. You're not just buying fries, McNuggets, and a dinosaur stamp; you're buying happiness. Their advertisements have convinced my children they have a little McDonald-shaped vacuum in their souls: "Our hearts are restless till they find their rest in a happy meal."

I try to buy off the kids sometimes. I tell them to order only the food and I'll give them a quarter to buy a little toy on their own. But the cry goes up, "I want a Happy Meal." All over the restaurant, people crane their necks to look at the tight-fisted, penny-pinching cheapskate of a parent who would deny a child the meal of great joy. The problem with the Happy Meal is that the happy wears off, and they need a new fix. No child discovers lasting happiness in just one: "Remember that Happy Meal? What great joy I found there!" Happy Meals bring happiness only to McDonalds. You ever wonder why Ronald McDonald wears that grin? Twenty billion Happy Meals, that's why.

When you get older, you don't get any smarter; your happy meals just get more expensive. Not long after we'd had the first public Sunday service at our church, I talked to a friend who pastors a church he helped found thirty years ago. "Savor these days," he advised me. "You'll discover one day that these early days will have been the best years of your life." I nodded, but inwardly I told myself he must be crazy. The early days are chaos and uncertainty. Someday we will have stability and continuity, we will have security and resources and credibility; we will have arrived. "That's when I'll be happy," I whispered to myself. That's when fulfillment will kick in, when we have arrived.